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THE WRITINGS OF

PROSPER MÉRIMÉE

COMPRISING HIS

NOVELS, TALES, AND LETTERS TO AN UNKNOWN

WITH

An Essay on the Genius and Achievement of the Author

By GEORGE SAINTSBURY, M.A.

COMPLETE IN EIGHT VOLUMES

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THE NOVELS, TALES AND LETTERS
OF
PROSPER MÉRIMÉE

EDITED BY PROF. GEORGE SAINTSBURY, M.A.

COMPLETE IN EIGHT VOLUMES

LETTERS TO AN UNKNOWN

I

Translated by
OLIVE EDWARDS PALMER

Illustrated with
Contemporary Drawings and
Portraits

NEW YORK
FRANK S. HOLBY
MCMVI

Napoleon III.

From an engraving by Metzmacher

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From a painting by his mother

PROSPER MÉRIMÉE

I MET Mérimée frequently in society. He was a tall man, erect in his bearing, pale, and, excepting his smile, had the appearance of an Englishman; he had, at all events, that cold, distant manner which forbids in advance any attempt at familiarity. Merely to see him one was impressed by his callousness, either natural or acquired, by his self-control, by his determined self-repression. On ceremonious occasions, especially, the immobility of his countenance was conspicuously manifest.

Even in the society of his intimate friends, and when relating a witty anecdote, his voice retained its habitual calmness and tranquillity, with never an outburst, never a sign of enthusiasm. The drollest details he described in the most precise language, in the tone of a man asking for a cup of tea. All evidences of sensibility he had mastered until it seemed a quality absent from his nature. Not that it was so—quite the contrary; but race-horses there are so well trained that, once under their master's hand, they never so much as make a sudden start.

His training, it must be said, had begun early. When ten or eleven years old, I imagine, having committed some impropriety, he was scolded severely and sent from the room. Weeping and in great distress, he was just closing the door when he heard laughter within the room, and some one said: "Poor child! he believes we are really angry

with him!" Intolerable to him was the idea of being a dupe, and he resolved thereupon to overcome a sensitiveness which had caused him such humiliation. He kept his word. "Remember to mistrust," such was his motto.

To guard against every manifestation of pleasure, never to abandon himself unreservedly to the expression of emotion, to be tricked neither by others nor by himself, in his conduct and his writings to have in view the constant presence of an unsympathetic, mocking spectator; to be himself that spectator—these are the most distinguishing characteristics of his nature, of which every phase of his life, of his work, and of his talent bears the imprint.[1]

His attitude was always that of an amateur; it can hardly be otherwise with one who is endowed with the critical temperament. From turning the tapestry around and around, one ends by seeing nothing but the wrong side; and thus, instead of lovely figures, gracefully posed, one sees only the rough bits of embroidery silk. To such a one, it is irksome with forbearance to engage in any public work; to cast in his lot even with the party of his choice, with the school of his preference, the science which he pur-

[1] One would suppose that in Saint Clair, a character in *The Etruscan Vase*, he has drawn himself: "He was naturally tender-hearted and affectionate, but at an age when lasting impressions are too easily formed, his over-transparent sensitiveness subjected him to the derision of his companions. . . . From that time he made it his business to conceal all appearances of what he regarded as a contemptible weakness. . . . In society he gained the unfortunate reputation of being unfeeling and indifferent. . . . He had travelled widely, and read much, yet he spoke of his travels and reading only when it was absolutely necessary." Darcy, in *The Double Mistake*, is another character resembling his own.

Mérimée as a child

From a painting by his Mother

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[illegible]

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Mme Mérimée pinxit

sues, the art in which he excels; and if, at times, he descends voluntarily into the contest, more frequently he regards it from afar.

At an early age he was placed in comfortable circumstances, then in an employment which was both congenial and interesting, that of Inspector of Historic Monuments. He then succeeded to a seat in the Senate Chamber, and later to a post at court.

As Inspector of Historic Monuments, he was capable, painstaking, and valuable; in the Senate he had the good taste to be usually absent or silent; at court, he enjoyed perfect freedom of action and of speech. To travel, to study, to mingle with men and affairs, such was his real occupation, and his official claims proved no restraint to the indulgence of his tastes. We must remember, too, that a man of such genius compels respect, even in the face of obstacles. His irony pierces the best case-hardened armour. Let us see with what ease and grace he handles it, even to the point of directing it against himself, thus making a double shot.

One day, at Biarritz, he had read one of his novels to the empress. "Not long afterward I received a visit from a policeman, who said he had been sent by the grand-duchess. 'In what way may I serve you?' 'I come in the name of her royal highness, to beg that you will attend her this evening with your novel.' 'What novel?' 'The one you read to her majesty the other day.' I replied that I had the honour to be her majesty's jester, and that without her permission I could not accept engagements outside the court. I flew without delay to tell her the

incident, expecting that the result would be, at the very least, a war with Russia, and I was no little chagrined not only to receive authority to go, but to go that very evening to the home of the grand-duchess, to whom the policeman had been assigned as factotum. However, to soothe my feelings I wrote a letter to the grand-duchess giving her a piece of my mind. This letter, 'giving her a piece of my mind,' must have been an interesting composition, and I am sure the factotum did not show himself again."

As for formal gatherings, it would be impossible for any one to address them with more seriousness of demeanour and with less inward deference. Grave, sedate, of dignified carriage, when making an Academic visit, or delivering an impromptu address in public, his manner was irreproachable; but all the while the bird-organ behind the scenes was playing a comic air which turned both the orator and the audience to ridicule. "The president of the Antiquarian Society rose from his seat, all the other guests following his example. He began to speak, saying that inasmuch as from those aspects I was a man of notable attainments, he wished to propose my health, as senator, as man of letters, and as a scholar. There was only the table between us, and I was strongly tempted to hurl a glass of Roman punch at his head. . . . The next morning I listened to the minutes of the proceedings of the night before, in which it was stated that I had delivered a most eloquent address. I made a speech, to urge that all the adverbs be omitted from the report, but my request was not granted."

While a candidate for the Academy of Inscriptions, he was taken to call upon some learned persons of formidable

aspect; he wrote, on his return: "Have you ever seen dogs entering a badger's hole? Before they have had some experience in this occupation, they make, on entering, a desperate show of fierceness, and not infrequently come out much faster than they go in, for the badger is an ugly beast to visit. I never touch the door-bell of an Academician that I am not reminded of the badger, and compare myself, in my mind's eye, to the dog I have just described. I have not yet been bitten, however, but I have had some ludicrous encounters."

He was elected, and had, along with others, his archæological burrow. It is easy to guess, however, that his was not the temperament to be restricted to this or to any place of hiding. For him there were always several modes of exit. In him were two individualities: one which acquitted himself conscientiously of the essential duties and ceremonials incumbent upon him as a member of society; the other dwelling beside or above the first, and in contempt or resignation observing his actions.

Similarly, in his affections he had within him two distinct personalities. The first, the natural man, was kind, even tender. In friendship no one was more loyal, more trustworthy. Once he had extended his hand, there was no withdrawal. We see an instance of this in his defence of M. Libri, in opposition to the decision of the judges and to public sentiment. It was the act of a knight, who single-handed combats a whole army. Fined, and condemned to prison, he assumed no martyr's airs, and in submitting to his misfortune, brought to it all the grace that he had brought of courage to its provocation. He has never re-

ferred to it, save in a preface, and then only by way of apology, stating that he had been compelled "during the preceding month of July to spend a fortnight in a place in which he was not at all inconvenienced by the sunshine, and where he enjoyed unlimited leisure." Nothing more. It is the prudent, subtle smile of a gallant man.

He was, moreover, helpful and obliging. People who approached him to ask a favour went away discouraged because of his cold aspect, but a month later he would call upon them with the requested favour in his pocket. In his correspondence he gives expression to a striking phrase, to the truth of which all his friends will bear testimony: "It seldom happens that I sacrifice others to myself, and when this does occur I am overcome with remorse."

Toward the close of his life there lived in his home two elderly English ladies, to whom he seldom spoke and to whom apparently he gave little attention; yet a friend of mine found him in tears because one of them was ill. He never spoke of his most profound sentiments. Here we have a correspondence of love, which developed into friendship lasting for thirty years; the final letter was written the last day of his life, and yet no one knows the name of his correspondent. To one who can read these letters understandingly they are all that is graceful, tender, and delicate, truly affectionate, and—who would imagine it?—at times poetic, imaginative even, like a German lyric.

The following incident is so strange, that it must be quoted almost wholly:

"You have been such a long time writing to me that I began to be very uneasy. Besides, I have been harassed

by an absurd idea, which I have not dared to tell you before. I was visiting the amphitheatre at Nîmes with an architect of the department, who was explaining to me at length the repairs which he had had made there, when I saw ten feet away a lovely bird, a little larger than a tomtit, with a linen-gray body, and wings of red, black and white. This bird was perched on a cornice, gazing at me fixedly. I interrupted the architect, who is a great sportsman, to ask him the name of the bird. He told me he had never seen one like it. I approached, and, perching a few steps beyond, and still watching me, the bird did not take flight until I was close enough to touch it. Wherever I went the bird seemed to follow, for I saw it on every tier of the amphitheatre. It had no companion, and its flight was noiseless, like that of a bird of night.

"The next day I returned to the amphitheatre, and there was my bird again. I had brought some bread with me, which I threw to it. The bird looked at the food, but would not touch it. I then tempted it with a big grasshopper, thinking from the shape of the bill that it would eat insects, but the bird paid no attention to the grasshopper. The most learned ornithologist in the city told me that no bird of that species lived in the country.

"Finally, when I visited the amphitheatre for the last time, I found my bird again, still pursuing my steps, following me even into a narrow, dark corridor, where, bird of light that it was, it should not have dared to venture.

"I recalled then that the duchess of Buckingham had seen her husband in the form of a bird the day of his assassination, and the thought came to me that you were

dead, perhaps, and that you had assumed this form in order to visit me. In spite of myself, I could not shake off this foolish idea, and I was delighted, I assure you, to see that your letter bore the date of the day when I had first seen my mysterious bird."

It is thus that, even in a sceptic, affection and imagination are stirred; 'tis a "piece of folly," to be sure, but it is no less true that he was on the threshold of dreaming and in the highway of love.[1]

But along with the lover dwelt the critic, and the conflict between these two personages in the same man was productive of strange results. In such a case, it is better, perhaps, not to look too closely. "Do you realise," said La Fontaine, "that I am as blind to the faults of persons whom I may love never so little, as if I were a mole living a hundred feet under the ground? No sooner do I feel an atom of love, than I hasten to moisten it with all the incense of my store-house." This, perhaps, is the secret of his charm.

In the letters of Mérimée harsh words fall like rain amidst the soft ones: "I will admit that you have become much more beautiful physically, but not morally. . . . You still have a sylph-like figure, and, although

[1] The following is one of his generous and delicate actions; Béranger, in a similar experience, did the same: "When I went to Spain, I was on the point of falling in love. It was one of the beautiful acts of my life. The woman who was the cause of my voyage never suspected it. Had I remained, I might have committed, possibly, a great blunder—that of offering a woman worthy of enjoying every happiness that one may have on earth, in exchange for the loss of all that was dear to her, an affection which I realized was far inferior to the sacrifice that she would probably have made."

I am somewhat *blasé* concerning black eyes, I have never seen any so large in Constantinople or in Smyrna.

"Now comes the reverse of the medal. In many respects you have remained a child, and you have become a hypocrite into the bargain. . . . You imagine that you are proud, but I regret to tell you that what you think is pride is only the petty vanity which one would expect in a religious temperament. It is the fashion nowadays to preach. Shall you follow it? That would be the finishing stroke." And a little farther on: "In all that you say and do, you substitute invariably a conventional for a genuine sentiment. . . . I respect convictions, even those that seem to me the most absurd. You have a great many ridiculous notions (pardon the word), of which I should hesitate to deprive you since you are so fond of them, and have no others to take their place."

After two months of affectionate words, of quarrels, and of meetings he concludes thus: "It seems to me you become more egotistical every day. When you speak of *us*, you mean only *yourself*. The more I think of this, the more deplorable it appears. . . . We are so unlike that it is hardly possible to understand each other." It seems that he had met a character as restive and as independent as his own, "a lioness, though tame," and he analyses it thus: "It is a pity we can not meet the day after having a quarrel, for I am sure we should be in a perfectly amiable frame of mind. . . . Without doubt, my most dangerous enemy to your heart or, if you prefer, my strongest rival, is your pride. Whatever wounds that, excites your indignation. This notion you carry out, per-

haps unconsciously, in the most trifling matters. Is it not, for instance, your pride which is satisfied when I kiss your hand? This, you have said to me, makes you happy, and to this sensation you abandon yourself, because a demonstration of humility is gratifying to your pride."

Four months later, while he is absent from Paris, after a more serious misunderstanding: "You are one of those chilly women of the North, who are governed only by the mind. . . . Farewell, since we can be friends only at a distance. When we have grown old, perhaps we shall meet again with pleasure." Then, with a word of affection, he recovers his serenity. But the antagonism of their temperaments is bound to reappear. "Seldom do I reproach you, except for that lack of frankness, which keeps me constantly in a rage with you, compelled as I am always to search for your meaning under a disguise. . . . Why is it, when we have become all we are to each other, that you must reflect for several days before replying frankly to the simplest question of mine? . . . Between your reason and your heart, I never feel sure which will win; you do not know yourself, but you give the preference always to your reason. . . . If you have committed any wrong, it is assuredly that preference which you give to your pride over all the tenderness of your nature. The first sentiment is to the second as a colossus to a pygmy. And that pride of yours is at bottom nothing but a kind of selfishness."

All this ended in a warm and lasting friendship. But do you not consider admirable his delightful manner of love-making? They met in the Louvre, at Versailles,

and in the adjoining woods; they took long walks, even in January, several times a week; he admired "a radiant physiognomy, a splendid bearing, a white hand, superb black hair"; a mind whose intelligence and attainments were worthy of his own, the charms of an unusual type of beauty, the attractions of a broad and miscellaneous culture, the fascinations of a toilet, and a coquetry cleverly directed and managed; he breathed the exquisite perfume of an education so well chosen, and of a "nature so refined, that it summed up for him an entire civilisation"; to sum it all up, he was under the charm. Then the spectator reappears and resumes his post. He disputed the purport of a reply, of a gesture; he dissociated himself from his feelings that he might form an unbiassed judgment; he expressed candidly and epigrammatically his views one day, to regret them the next.

Such was the man as we find him reflected in his books. As a dilettante he wrote and studied, passing from one subject to another, as suggested by the occasion or his own fancy, without devoting himself to one system of knowledge, without dedicating himself to the worship of one idea. This was owing to no lack of study or of natural endowment; few men, on the contrary, have enjoyed a broader mental training. Besides French he was master of six languages, including their literature and philology: Italian, Greek, Latin, English, Spanish, and Russian. I believe, also, that he read German. An occasional phrase, or a reference in his correspondence, shows the extent to which he had directed these studies.

Calo he spoke in such a manner as to astonish the Span-

ish gipsies. He was familiar with the various Spanish dialects, and was able to decipher the archaic title-deeds of Catalonia. He understood perfectly English versification. Those only who have studied an entire literature, both in print and in manuscript, during the several successive periods of its development, in style and in orthography, are able to appreciate the skill and perseverance necessary to know Spanish as the author of *Don Pedro* knew it, and Russian as the author of *The Cossacks* and of *The False Demetrius* knew it. With a natural gift for languages, he pursued their acquirement even after reaching maturity. During the latter part of his life he became interested in philology, and while living in Cannes devoted himself to the critical studies which compose the comparative grammar.

To this acquaintance with books he had added that of monuments, his reports proving that throughout France he was the acknowledged expert in this branch of learning. He understood not only the purpose, but the technique, of architecture. Each ancient church he visited in person, conducting his examinations with the aid of the best architects the country afforded. His memory of local affairs was excellent by nature and by careful training.

Born in a family of artists, he was clever in the use of the brush, and as a water-colourist was equally skilful. In short, in this, as in everything he did, he went to the very foundations of the subject. Evasive expression he detested, writing no word until he had reached definite and absolute conclusions. It would be difficult to find a historian whose head was so complete a store-house of

information relating to the past, who was himself, indeed, a whole library, a whole museum of information.

He possessed, besides, the rarer gifts of a knowledge of life and a clear imagination, by the exercise of which those relics of the past were revivified and lived again. He had travelled widely, having made one journey to the Orient and two to Greece; he had visited England, Spain, and other countries twelve or fifteen times, and wherever he went he had been a close observer of the manners and customs not only of the best society, but of the peasantry also: "Many a time have I broken bread with people whom an Englishman would not notice for fear of losing his self-respect. I have even drunk from the same bottle with a convict."

He had lived on familiar terms with Spanish gipsies and toreadors. Many an evening he had told stories for the entertainment of a group of peasant men and women of Ardèche. One of the places where he felt most at home was in a Spanish *venta*, with the "mule-drivers and peasant women of Andalusia."

He sought out types perverted, and types unsullied, "through an inexhaustible curiosity for every variety of the human species," and thus formed in his memory a gallery of living pictures inestimably more precious than any other kind; for those of books and of edifices are but empty shells, once tenanted, but whose structure may be known only by imagining the forms that dwelt therein, from the poems that have survived. By a sort of divination, keen, accurate, and swift, he made this mental reconstruction. In the *Chronicle of Charles IX*, in *The*

Experiments of an Adventurer, and in the *Theater of Clara Gazul* it is evident that such was his involuntary method. His writings tend naturally to the demi-dreams of the artist, to scenic effect, and to romance which clothes the dead past with new life. With splendid acquirements and talents like these, he might have occupied in the field of history and of art a position of eminent importance and distinction; yet as a historian he has taken but a mediocre place, and as an artist, his rank, while a high one, is of narrow limit.

The bent of his mind led Mérimée to be suspicious, and suspicion carried to excess is harmful. To obtain from the study of any subject all that it is able to bestow, one must, I fancy, give oneself to it without reserve, be wedded to it, indeed, but not treat it as a mistress to whom one is devoted for two or three years, only to discard and take a new one. A man produces the best of which he is capable only when, after conceiving to himself some form of art, some method of science, in short some general idea of his subject, he becomes so enamoured that he finds it possessing attractions above all else—himself especially—and worships it as a goddess, whom he is happy only in serving.

Mérimée, also, was capable of cherishing this affection and adoration, but after a time the critic within him awoke, bringing the goddess to trial, only to discover that she was not entirely divine. All our methods of science, all our forms of art, all our general ideas, have some weak spot; the inadequate, the uncertain, the expedient, the artificial, abound therein; only the illusion of love can find them perfect, and a sceptic does not remain long in love. He put

on his magnifying glasses, and in the enchanting statue discovered a lack of poise, a vagueness and insincerity of construction, a modernity of attitude. Becoming disgusted, he turned away, not without reason, to be sure, and these reasons he explains in passing. He sees in our philosophy of history an element of speculation, in our mania for erudition the futility, inutility; he sees extravagance in our taste for the picturesque, and insipidity in our paintings of realism. Let inventors and simpletons, through vanity or stupidity, accept, if they like, such a system, such a style; but as for himself, he rejects it, or, if he has not rejected, he regrets that he has not done so.

"About the year of grace 1827 I belonged to the Romantic school. We said to the Classicists, 'Without *local colour*, there is no hope of salvation,' meaning by local colour that which in the seventeenth century was known as manners and customs. But we were mighty proud of our word, and imagined that we had invented both the word and the thing for which it stood." When, later, he wrote some Illyrian poems which were construed by the critics beyond the Rhine with the utmost seriousness, he was able to boast of having, indeed, created local colour. "But," said he, "the process was so simple, so easy, that I came at last to doubt the value of local colour itself, and forgave Racine for having clothed with civilisation the savage heroes of Sophocles and Euripides."

Toward the end of his life, he avoided resolutely the acceptance of all theories; they were, in his opinion, good only to work on the credulity of philosophers and as a means of livelihood for professors. He accepted and re-

peated only anecdotes and small facts of observation in philology; for instance, the exact date when one ceases to meet in Old French the two cases derived from the Latin declension. By dint of his craving for certainty, knowledge came to be to him but a withered plant, a stalk devoid of blossoms. In no other way can we explain the lifelessness of his historical essays, *Don Pedro*, *The Cossacks*, *The False Demetrius*, *The Social War*, *The Conspiracy of Catiline*, studies vigorous, exhaustive, well-maintained and well-developed, but whose characters are not alive, probably because he did not care to give them life. For in another work, *The Experiments of an Adventurer*, he has caused the sap to return to the plant, so that it may be seen successively under its two aspects, dull and rigid in the historical herbarium, fresh and green in the work of art. In placing his Spaniards of the nineteenth century as the contemporaries of Sylla in this herbarium, they were as clearly seen by his inner vision, no doubt, as was his adventurer; at any rate, this would have been no more of a tax upon his mental retina. He was reluctant, however, to permit us to see them thus, conceding only facts which could bear the test of proof, refusing to give his own assumptions rather than authentic occurrences, critical to the impairment of his own work, severe to the point of suppressing the best part of himself, and of placing his imagination under the ban.

In his artistic works the critic still rules, but in this case his office is usually one of service, to control and to direct his talent like a spring which is confined within a pipe that it may gush forth in a stream slender and compressed.

Certain gifts were his by nature which no amount of application can bestow, and which were never possessed by his master, Stendhal—the talent for scenic effect, for dialogue, for humorous situations. He knew the art of introducing two characters, and by their conversation alone of bringing them in strong relief before the vision of the reader. Like Stendhal, moreover, he understood personal peculiarities, and was a skilful story-teller. These clever powers he subjected to a severe training, and, by a double strain, endeavoured to compel them to yield the best results from the smallest material.

From the very first he had delighted in the Spanish drama, which is overflowing with vigour and action; and he borrowed a number of its situations to compose, under a fictitious name, some short pieces of deep purport and modern significance; and, a thing unique in the history of literature, many of these imitations—*The Crisis* and *Perichole*, for example—are superior to his original stories. Nowhere else do the characters stand out so distinctly and so energetically as in his comedies. In *The Conspirators*, and in *The Two Heirs*, each personage, according to Goethe, resembles one of those perfect watches of transparent crystal, in the face of which is visible, not only the exact time, but also the action of the entire interior mechanism. All the minutest details are burdened with significance.

It is the attribute of great masters of painting in five or six strokes of the crayon to sketch in a face which, once seen, can never be forgotten. Even in his less popular comedies—for example, in *The Spaniards in Denmark*—

there are characters, like the Lieutenant Charles Leblanc and his mother, the spy, who will remain forever in the human memory.

If, indeed, so confirmed a sceptic had deigned to have any moral sensibility, he would have explained, I fancy, that to a good judge of mankind every individual is reduced to three or four essential qualities, which manifest themselves completely in a few significant actions; all else is but acquired, and therefore unimportant, to exhibit which is but a waste of time. Intelligent readers will take this for granted, and it is for intelligent readers only that one should write. Leave idle chatter to chatterers; deal with vital points only, and these exemplify by none but convincing actions. To condense, to curtail, to summarise life, is the purpose of art.

Such, at any rate, was his, which he realises even better in his romances than in his comedies, where the requirements of stage effect and of humorous situations can not fail to exaggerate incidents, to caricature truth, and to conceal behind a theatrical mask the living face.[1] The novelist, less hampered by restrictions and with wider resources at his command, may draw his characters with a more accurate and also a freer hand. Many of these novels are masterpieces, and we may believe that they will continue in the future to be held as classics.

For this assumption there are several reasons: In the

[1] The Résident in *The Spaniards in Denmark*, the Count and other gentlemen in *The Conspirators*, Kermouton and the Butter Merchant in *The Two Heirs*. But on the other hand, what true analyses are the characters of Clémence, of Sévin, and of Miss Jackson!

first place, they have lived already for thirty or forty years, and *Carmen*, *The Taking of the Redoubt*, *Colomba*, *Matteo Falcone*, *The Abbé Aubain*, *Arsène Guillot*, *The Venus of Ille*, *The Game of Backgammon*, *Tamango*, even *The Etruscan Vase*, and *The Double Mistake*, are almost all little structures that stand now as firmly as the day they were erected. This is explained by the fact that they are built of carefully selected stone, not of stucco and other popular materials. Here we find none of those descriptions which pass out of fashion after half a century, and which to-day we consider so tiresome in the romances of Walter Scott; we see none of those reflections, disquisitions, interpretations, which we think so tedious in the novels of Fielding; nothing but action, and action never fails to be instructive. This is all the more striking inasmuch as important action only is introduced, intelligible alike to readers of another country and another century. In the works of Balzac and of Dickens, where this precaution was not observed, many minute details of local or technical significance will be lost, like a plastered wall which crumbles away, or they will be serviceable only to commentators in their commentaries.

A second reason for their endurance is the brevity of these romances, the longest of them consuming but half a volume, while one is but six pages. All, however, stand out clearly and are carefully developed, the interest centred around a single action and a single purpose. Now we must consider posterity in the light that we do a foreigner, in that it does not exercise the forbearance of contemporary readers, and that it does not tolerate tedious-

ness; for how many persons to-day will submit to the eight volumes of Clarissa Harlowe? We must remember, in short, that human attention overtaxed ends invariably in bankruptcy; it is prudent, therefore, when after a century its consideration is still sought, to speak in language concise, clear, and open.

It is wise, moreover, in addressing posterity to choose interesting subjects and to treat them in an interesting way. Interesting subjects: that would exclude events essentially tame or commonplace, characters essentially colourless or ordinary. To treat these in an interesting way: which means situations and passions of sufficient vitality, after the lapse of a century, to have them serve actual conditions. The types chosen by Mérimée were sincere, strong, and original. We may compare them to medallions of durable metal, in bold relief, set in an appropriate frame and amid harmonious surroundings; an officer's first battle, a Corsican vendetta, a slave-trader's last voyage, a slip from the path of integrity, the sacrifice of a son by his father, a secret tragedy in a modern salon. Like the novels of Bandello and the Italian fiction-writers, almost all his tales are sanguinary, and are painful, besides, from the cold-bloodedness of the recital, the accuracy of the action, and the skilful convergence of details.

Far better, each one is, in its little setting, a record of human nature, a record, complete and of far-reaching import, to which a philosopher, a moralist, may return year after year without exhausting its interest.

Multitudes of dissertations on primitive and savage instinct, wise treatises, like those of Schopenhauer, on the

metaphysics of love and of death, can not be compared in value to the hundred pages of *Carmen*.

The wax taper of *Arsène Guillot* summarises many volumes concerning the religion of the common people and of the inmost feelings of courtesans. I know of no more scathing sermon against the blunders of credulity or of imagination than *The Double Mistake*, and *The Etruscan Vase*. In the year 2000 *The Game of Backgammon* will be read again, probably, to learn what it costs to cheat.

Notice, finally, that at no time does the author force himself on our notice that he may emphasise the lesson, but remains in the background, leaving us to draw our own conclusions. He effaces himself even deliberately so as to appear altogether absent. Future readers will show consideration for a host so polite, so graceful, so discreet in doing the honours of his own home. Good manners are at all times pleasing, and a more courteous host than Mérimée it would be impossible to find. Greeting his guests at the threshold, he introduces them and then withdraws, leaving them at liberty to examine and to criticise undisturbed. He is not obtrusive; he does not call attention to his treasures; never will he be caught in the act of a display of vanity. Instead of exposing his knowledge, he conceals it; to listen to him, it would seem as if any one at all might have written his book. Now it is an anecdote related to him by one of his friends, and which he has transcribed on the spot; now it is "a selection" from Brantôme, and from d'Aubigné. If he wrote *The Experiments of an Adventurer*, it was because he had once, for a

fortnight, had nothing better to do. For writing *The Guzla*, the recipe is simple: to procure statistics referring to Illyria, to get the travels of the Abbé Fortis, and to learn five or six Slav words. This resolution not to overestimate himself comes to be in the end an affectation. So great is his dread of appearing pedantic that he flies to the opposite extreme, and the result is his tone of flippancy, his unceremonious manner of the man of society.

The day may come when this will prove to be his vulnerable point, when it will be asked whether this perpetual air of irony is not intentional; whether he is justified in joking in the very midst of tragedy; whether his apparent callousness is not due to the fear of ridicule; whether his free-and-easy tone is not the effect of embarrassment; whether the gentleman has not been harmful to the author; whether his art was sufficiently dear to him. On more than one occasion, notably in *The Venus of Ille*, he availed himself of this to mystify the reader. Elsewhere, in Lokis,[1] a grotesque idea, with double meaning, lies at the foundation of the tale, like a toad in a chiselled casket. He seemed to find delight in seeing a woman's fingers unlock the casket, and a pretty face terrified by the sight of some object of loathing made him laugh. It appears that he wrote almost always at random, to amuse himself, to pass the time, without allowing himself to be swayed by an idea, with no conception of a great unity of purpose, with no self-subordination to his work.

In this, as in all else, he was disenchanted, and we find him finally out of tune with life. Scepticism engenders

[1] *Letters to an Unknown*, Vol. II, p. 294.

melancholy; and in this regard his correspondence is truly depressing. His health failed gradually; he spent his winters regularly at Cannes, realising that life was slipping away from him.

He took care of his health; he watched over himself; it is the sole concern which the man continued to feel until the end. By the advice of his physician, he practised archery, and as a distraction painted views of the adjacent country. Every day he might be seen walking in silence along the country roads with his two Englishwomen, one carrying his bow, the other his box of water-colours. In this way he killed time and cultivated patience. Out of kindliness of heart he went to a lonely cabin half a mile away, to nurse a cat; he collected flies for a pet lizard; these were his favorite companions. When the railway train brought a friend to visit him, he recovered his animation and became once more his charming self; his letters were so always, for his quaint and exquisite humour he could not repress. But of happiness there was none; to him the future was dark, almost as dark as it is to us to-day; before closing his eyes it was his sorrow to witness the complete destruction of his country's edifice. He expired September 23, 1870.

If one should endeavour to sum up his character and his genius, he will find, I fancy, that with a tender heart, the gift of nature, endowed with superior intelligence, having lived the life of a gentleman and having worked with somewhat of industry, producing a number of books of the highest order, Mérimée did not, however, accomplish all the good that was his to yield, did not attain to all the

happiness to which it was his right to aspire. Through his fear of being a dupe, he was suspicious in every phase of life—in love, in science, in art;[1] and yet he was the dupe of his own mistrust. One is sure always of being the dupe of something, and it may be better, perhaps, to reconcile oneself to the fact in advance.

H. TAINE.

November, 1873.

[1] *Letters to an Unknown*, I, p. 7. "Abandon your optimistic ideas and realise that we are in this world to struggle and contend with our fellows. . . . Learn, also, that nothing is more common than to do wrong merely for the pleasure of doing it."

LETTERS TO AN UNKNOWN

Lettres à une Inconnue

LETTERS TO AN UNKNOWN

I

PARIS, *Thursday.*

I RECEIVED your letter in due time. Everything about you is paradoxical, and the same reasons lead you to act in a manner precisely contrary to that of other mortals. You say you are going to the country. Well and good; that signifies that you will have nothing to do but write, for in the country the days are long, and idleness is propitious for letter-writing. At the same time, the watchfulness and solicitude of your guardian being less interrupted by the customary engagements of the city, you will have to submit to more catechising when letters come to you. In a château, moreover, the arrival of a letter is an event. Not at all; while you may not be able to write, you may, on the other hand, receive no end of letters.

I am beginning to be accustomed to your ways, and am no longer surprised at anything you do. I beg you, however, to take pity on me, and do not put to too severe a test the unfortunate habit I have formed—I know not how—of thinking everything that you do to be right.

I recall having been somewhat too frank, perhaps, in my last letter, on the subject of my own disposition. A friend of mine, an old diplomat, and a very shrewd man, has often said to me: "Never speak ill of yourself. Your friends will always do that for you." I begin to fear that you will interpret literally every word of disparagement I said of myself. You must understand that my cardinal virtue is modesty; I carry it to excess, and tremble lest it may prejudice you against me. Some other time, when I am more happily inspired, I will give you the exact nomenclature of all my characteristics. It will be a long list. To-day I am not feeling well, and dare not launch forth into this geometrical progression.

You can not possibly guess where I was Saturday night, and what I was doing at midnight. I was on the roof of one of the towers of Notre Dame, drinking orangeade and eating ices, in the company of four of my friends and

of a matchless moon, all of us attended by an immense owl that flapped his wings around us. Paris, indeed, in the moonlight and at that hour, presents a truly beautiful picture. It resembles the cities described in the *Thousand and One Nights*, whose inhabitants were enchanted while they slept. Parisians, as a rule, go to bed at midnight—the more stupid they. Our party was a curious assemblage; there were four nations represented, each one having a different point of view. The tiresome part of it was that some of us felt obliged, in the presence of the moon and of the owl, to assume a sentimental tone, and to utter commonplaces. To tell the truth, everybody began gradually to talk nonsense.

I do not know why and by what association of ideas this semi-poetic evening recalls to my mind another, which was not in the least poetic. I went to a ball given by some of my young friends, to which were invited all the ballet girls of the Opera. These women are, as a rule, dull, but I have observed that in moral feeling they are superior to the men of their class. The only vice which separates them from other women is poverty. You will be singularly edified by all these rhapsodies, so I shall hasten to a close, which I should have done long ago.

Good-bye. Do not bear me a grudge for the unflattering portrait of myself which I have given you.

II

PARIS.

Frankness and truth are virtues seldom esteemed by women as desirable; rather are they qualities to be avoided. For this reason you regard me as a Sardanapalus, because I attended a ball at which the ballet girls of the Opera were present. You reproach me for that evening as if it were a crime, and you reproach me for commending those poor girls as if that were a still greater crime. I repeat it, give them wealth, and thereafter only their good qualities will be seen. But an insurmountable barrier has been raised by the aristocracy between the different social classes, so that neither class may discover how much alike are the happenings on each side of the barrier. I want to tell you the story of a ballet girl that I heard in this same shocking society. In a house in the rue Saint Honoré lived a poor woman who never left the little attic room which she rented at three francs a month. She had one daughter twelve years old, who was always neatly dressed, very demure, and ex-

tremely reserved in manner. This little girl went out three afternoons in the week and returned alone at midnight. It was known that she was a chorus girl at the Opera. One day she goes down to the porter's room and asks for a lighted candle. It is given to her. The porter's wife, surprised not to see her come downstairs again, climbs to the garret, finds the woman dead on her wretched pallet, and the little girl occupied in burning unread an enormous quantity of letters which she was taking from a large trunk. She says: "My mother died last night, and charged me to destroy all her letters without reading them." This child has never known her mother's real name; she is now absolutely alone in the world, without any resource but to act the vulture, the monkey, or the devil at the Opera.

Her mother's last word of counsel was to urge her to be prudent, and to continue to be a ballet girl. She is, moreover, very discreet, deeply religious, and it is with reluctance that she refers to her story. Tell me, please, if it is not infinitely more creditable for this little girl to lead the life she does, than for you who enjoy the singular good fortune of an irreproachable environment, and of a temperament of such refinement that it seems to me to sum up the

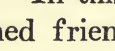
qualities of an entire civilisation. I must tell you the truth. I can endure the society of ignoble people only at rare intervals, and then only because of an inexhaustible curiosity which I feel for every variety of the human species. I can never tolerate low society among men. To me there is something too repulsive in them, especially in our own countrymen. In Spain, however, I made friends always with the mule-drivers and the *toreros*. Many a time have I broken bread with people whom an Englishman would not notice for fear of losing his self-respect. I have even drunk from the same bottle with a convict. I must admit that there was no other bottle, and one must drink when he is thirsty. Do not from this imagine that I have a preference for the rabble. It is simply that I like to see other manners, other faces, and to hear another language. The ideas are always the same, and if one eliminates all that is conventional, I believe that good manners may be found elsewhere than in a drawing-room of the faubourg Saint Germain. All this is Arabic to you, and I do not know why I say it.

August 8.

I have been a long time finishing this letter. My mother has been extremely ill, and I very anxious. She is now out of danger, and I trust

that in a few days she will be in perfect health. I can not endure anxiety, and while her life was in danger I was quite daft.

Adieu.

P.S.—The water-colour which I intended for you is not turning out well, and I am so dissatisfied with it that I shall probably not send it to you. Do not let this prevent you from sending me the needle-work you have made for me. Be sure to choose a trustworthy messenger. As a general rule, never take a woman as a confidante; sooner or later you will regret it. Learn also that nothing is more common than to do wrong merely for the pleasure of doing it. Abandon your optimistic ideas, and realise that we are in this world to struggle and contend with our fellows. In this connection I will tell you that a learned friend of mine, who reads hieroglyphics, says that on the Egyptian coffins were often found these two words, *Life, War;* which proves that I have not invented the maxim just quoted. In hieroglyphics it is expressed thus:  . The first character signifies life, and represents, I believe, one of those vases called *canopes*. The other is a reduced shield, with an arm holding a lance. There's science for you!

Again adieu.

III

PARIS.

Your reproaches please me greatly. I am, indeed, predestined by the fairies. I ask myself often what I am to you, and what you are to me. To the first question I can have no reply; as for the second, I fancy that I love you as if you were a fourteen-year-old niece of whom I were the guardian. As for your exceedingly moral relative, who has so much ill to say of me, he reminds me of Thwackum, who is always saying, "Can any virtue exist without religion?" Have you read *Tom Jones?*—a book as immoral as all of mine together. If it has been forbidden you, I am confident you have read it. What a farce of an education is that which you are getting in England! What does it amount to? People lose their breath preaching to a young girl, and the result is that this young girl desires to know the identical immoral being for whom people flatter themselves they have given her an aversion. What an admirable story is that of the serpent! I wish Lady M—— could read this letter. Fortunately, she would faint about the tenth line.

Turning the page, I have reread what I have

just written, and it seems to me that there is very little coherence and connection of ideas. That is a fault of mine, but I write just as I think, and as my thoughts are more rapid than my pen, the consequence is that I am forced to omit all the transitions. I should, perhaps, follow your example, and erase all the first page; but I prefer to resign it to you for reflection and curl-papers. I must confess, too, that just at this moment I am deeply absorbed in an affair which, I avow to my shame, dwells stubbornly in one-half of my brain, while the other half is entirely filled with you. The portrait which you draw of yourself I like tolerably well. It does not flatter you any too much, and all that I know of you pleases me prodigiously. . . .

I am studying you with the liveliest curiosity. I have theories about the most trifling things, about gloves, about boots, about curls, etc., and I attach great importance to such things, because I have discovered that there is an actual relation between the temperament of women and the caprice (or, to express it better, the connection of ideas and the reasoning) which causes them to choose such and such a fabric. Thus, for instance, it is for me to have demonstrated that a woman who wears blue gowns is a coquette, and poses as a sentimentalist. The

demonstration is easy, but it would take too long. How should you like it if I were to send you a wretchedly bad water-colour, larger than this sheet, and which could be neither rolled nor folded? Wait until I can make you a smaller one, that can be sent in a letter.

The other day I went sailing. On the river there were any number of little sail-boats, carrying all sorts of people. There was one very large boat in which were several women of questionable manners. All these boats had landed, and from the largest stepped a man about forty years old, who was amusing himself by playing on a tambourine. While I was admiring the musical talent of this creature, a woman of perhaps twenty-three, approached him, calling him a monster, telling him that she had followed him from Paris, and that if he would not allow her to join him he would repent it. All this occurred on the bank, about twenty feet from our boat. The man with the tambourine continued playing while the deserted woman was thus holding forth, and with the utmost indifference replied that he did not intend to have her in his boat; whereupon she climbed out to the boat moored farthest from the bank, and threw herself into the river, splashing us abominably. Although she had extinguished my cigar, indig-

nation did not deter me, or my friends either, from pulling her out of the water before she had been in it long enough to swallow two glasses. The beauteous object of all this despair had not so much as budged, and murmured between his teeth, "Why rescue her, when she wished to drown herself?" We took the woman to an inn, and as it was getting late, and it was almost dinner-time, we left her to the care of the tavern-keeper's wife.

How does it happen that the most indifferent men are the best beloved by women? This is what I asked myself as I sailed down the Seine, what I am still asking myself, and what I beg you to tell me, if you know.

Good-bye. Write to me often; let us be friends, and pardon the incoherence of my letter. Some day I will explain the reason.

IV

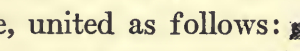
Mariquita de mi alma (it is thus that I should commence if we were in Granada), I received your letter in one of those moments of melancholy when one views life only through dark glasses. As your epistle is not as amiable as it might be—pardon my frankness—it has contributed not a little to the continuance of my

sulky mood. I wished to answer your letter Sunday, promptly and sharply; promptly, because you had censured me in an indirect sort of way, and sharply, because I was furious with you.

I was interrupted at the first word of my letter, and this interruption prevented me from writing to you. Thank the good Lord for this, for the weather is fine to-day, and my ill-humour has become mollified to such an extent that I no longer wish to write to you save in a style of honey and sugar. I shall not quarrel with you, therefore, about thirty or forty passages in your last letter, which gave me a terrible shock, and which I am quite willing to forget. I forgive you, and with so much the more pleasure because I really believe that, in spite of my wrath, I like you better when you are pouting than in any other mood. One passage in your letter made me laugh all by myself for ten minutes. You tell me short and sweet: "My love is promised" and thus you bring on the great knock-down blow without any preliminary skirmishes.

You say you are engaged for life as you would say, "I am engaged for the quadrille." Very well. I have apparently employed my time to advantage in discussing with you ques-

tions of love, marriage, and the like; you are still on the point of believing, or at least of saying, that when you are told to love a certain gentleman, you love him. Have you promised by a contract signed before a notary, or on vignetted paper?

When I was a school-boy I received once from a seamstress a note surmounted by two hearts aflame, united as follows:  ; there was, besides, a declaration of the most affectionate kind. My teacher first confiscated my letter, and then locked me in my room. The object of this budding passion proceeded to console herself with my cruel teacher.

Nothing is so fatal as engagements to those in whose behalf they are made. Do you know that if your love were already promised, I should believe confidently that it would be possible for you to love me? Why should you not love me? for you have made me no promises, since the first law of nature is to take a dislike to everything that has the appearance of an obligation. And, indeed, every obligation is in its nature irksome. In short, if I had less modesty I should come to the conclusion that if you have pledged your love to some one, you will give it to me, to whom you have promised nothing. Joking aside, and speaking of prom-

ises, since you do not care to have my water-colour, I have a strong desire to send it to you. I was dissatisfied with it, and began a copy of an infant Marguerite of Velasquez, which I wished to give you. Velasquez is not easy to copy, especially for daubers like myself. Twice I have begun my Marguerite, but now I am even more discontented with it than I was with the monk. The latter is still subject to your orders. I will send it whenever you wish, but it will not carry conveniently. Not only this, the spirits which sometimes amuse themselves by intercepting our letters might possibly take care of my picture. What reassures me is that it is so bad that no one but I could have made it, and no one but you be blamed for it. Let me know your pleasure.

I hope you will be in Paris about the middle of October, at which time I shall have two or three weeks' leisure. I should not care to spend them in France, and for a long time I have intended to see the Rubens pictures at Antwerp, and the Art Gallery at Amsterdam. If I were sure of seeing you, however, I should renounce Rubens and Van Dyck with the greatest cheerfulness. You see that the sacrifice costs me nothing. I do not know Amsterdam. However, it is for you to decide. Here your vanity

will lead you to say: "A great sacrifice, indeed, not to prefer me to those fat Flemish women, with their white caps and baskets of fish, and in a picture gallery besides!" Yes, it is a sacrifice, and a great one too. I give up the certainty, that is, the very great pleasure, of seeing the paintings of a master, to the very uncertain chance that you will compensate me. Observe, that leaving out of consideration the impossible supposition that you might not please me, if *I* were to prove a disappointment to *you*, I should have good reason to regret my works of art and my fat Flemish women.

You seem to be devoutly superstitious even. I am reminded at this moment of a pretty little Grenada girl, who, on mounting her mule to go through a mountain pass at Ronda (a spot notorious for robbers), piously kissed her thumb, and struck her breast five or six times, absolutely certain after that that the robbers would not show themselves, provided the *Inglés* (meaning myself, for every traveller must be an Englishman) would not swear too much by the Holy Virgin and the Saints. This shocking manner of speaking becomes necessary on bad roads in order to persuade the horses to go.

Read "Tristram Shandy." I should enjoy immensely your opinion of the story of that per-

son. You are unjust and jealous—two admirable qualities in a woman, two faults in a man. I have them both. You ask me about the affair which preoccupies me. To tell you that, it would be necessary to describe my life and my character, of which no one has the least idea, because I have never yet found any one who inspired me with sufficient confidence to tell it. After we have met often we may perhaps become good friends, and you will understand me. To have a friend to whom I could express all my thoughts, past and present, would be to me the greatest blessing. I am becoming sad, and I must not end this letter in such a mood. I am consumed with the desire to have an answer from you. Be kind, and do not make me wait long.

Good-bye. Do not let us quarrel again, and let us be friends. With respect I kiss the hand which you extend to me in sign of peace.

V

September 25.

Your letter found me ill, and very dreary, busily engaged with some extremely troublesome affairs, so that I have not had time to take care of myself. I have, I think, inflammation

of the lungs, which makes me exceedingly irritable. In a few days, however, I propose to take myself in hand and get well.

I have decided not to leave Paris in October, in the hope that you will come then. You shall see me or not, at your pleasure. It will be your fault if you do not. You mention particular reasons which prevent you from trying to meet me. I respect secrets, and do not ask your motives; only, I beg you to tell me, really and truly, if you have any. Are you not moved, rather, by some childish notion? Perhaps some one has read you a lecture on my account, and you are still under its spell. You should have no fear of me. Your natural prudence, doubtless, counts for much in your disinclination to see me. Be reassured, I shall not fall in love with you. A few years ago that might have happened; now I am too old, and I have been too unfortunate. I can never fall in love again, because my illusions have caused me many *desengaños*.

When I went to Spain I was on the point of falling in love. It was one of the beautiful acts of my life. The woman who was the cause of my voyage never suspected it. Had I remained, I might have committed, possibly, a great blunder, that of offering a woman worthy of enjoying every happiness that one may have on earth,

in exchange for the loss of all that was dear to her, an affection which I realised was far inferior to the sacrifice that she would probably have made. You recall my maxim, "Love excuses all things, but one must be sure that it is love." You may be sure that this precept is more rigid than those of your Methodist friends. In conclusion, I shall be charmed to see you. You, perhaps, may gain a real friend, and I, it may be, shall find in you what I have long sought—a woman with whom I shall not be in love, but one whom I may have for a confidante. We shall both gain, probably, by a closer acquaintance. Still, you must act as your lofty sense of prudence dictates.

My monk is ready. At the first opportunity, therefore, I shall send you the picture framed. The child Marguerite, still unfinished and too badly begun to be ever completed, will remain just as it is, and will serve as a blotting-pad for a sketch I shall do for you when I have time. I am dying of curiosity to see the surprise you have in store for me, but in vain do I rack my brain to guess it. When writing to you I omit all transitions, with me a very necessary trick of style.

You will find this letter, I fear, terribly disconnected. The reason is, that while writing

one sentence another comes to my mind, and this occasions a third before the second one is finished. I am suffering greatly to-night. If you have any influence Above, try to obtain for me a little health, or, failing in that, resignation; for I am the most impatient invalid in the world, and treat my best friends abominably.

Stretched on my couch, I think of you, of our mysterious acquaintance, with pleasure, and it seems to me that I should be very happy to chat with you in the same desultory way that I write; besides, there is this advantage, that words vanish, but writing remains. I am not tormented, however, by the thought that some day my words, either living or posthumous, may be published. Good-bye. Let me have your sympathy. I would I had the courage to tell you a thousand things that make life sad. But how can I, when you are so far away? When are you coming? Again good-bye. If your heart prompts you, you have an abundance of time to write to me.

P.S.—*September 26.*—I am even more low-spirited than I was yesterday. I suffer tortures, but if you have never had gastritis you can have no conception of what it means to suffer pain that is indefinite and at the same time intense. It has this peculiarity, that it affects the entire

nervous system. I should like to be in the country with you. I am sure you would cure me. Good-bye. If I die this year, you will be sorry that you did not know me better.

VI

Do you know that you are sometimes very kind? I do not say this as a reproach veiled by a cold compliment, but I should be glad indeed to receive frequent letters like your last one. Unfortunately, you are not always so charitably inclined towards me. I have not replied earlier, because your letter was only delivered to me last night, on my return from a short trip. I spent four days in absolute solitude, without seeing a man, much less a woman, for I do not call men and women certain bipeds who are trained to fetch food and drink when they are ordered to do so. During my retreat I made the most dismal reflections about myself and my future, about my friends, and so on. If I had had the wit to wait for your letter it would have given quite another turn to my thoughts. "I should have carried away happiness enough to last me at least a week."

The way in which you came down on that worthy Mr. V. is delightful. Your courage

pleases me immensely. I should never have supposed you capable of such *capricho*, and I admire you all the more for it. It is true that the remembrance of your splendid black eyes counts for something in my admiration. However, old as I am, I am almost insensible to beauty. I say to myself that "it amounts to nothing"; but I assure you that when I heard a man of very fastidious taste say you were very pretty, I could not repress a feeling of sadness. This is the reason (but first let me assure you that I am not the least bit in love with you): I am horribly jealous, jealous of my friends, and it grieves me to think that your beauty exposes you to the attentions of a lot of men incapable of appreciating you, and who admire in you only those things for which I care the least.

In fact, I am in a beastly humour when I think of that ceremony which you are to attend. Nothing makes me more melancholy than a wedding. The Turks, who bargain for a woman while they examine her as they would a fat sheep, are better than we, who have glossed over this vile trade with a varnish of hypocrisy which, alas! is only too transparent. I have asked myself often what I should find to say to a wife on the first day of my marriage, and I have thought of nothing possible, unless it were a compliment

on her night-cap. Happily, the devil will be extremely clever if he ever entraps me into such an entertainment. The part which the woman plays is much easier than that of the man. On such an occasion she models her conduct on Racine's Iphigenia; but if she is at all observant, what a lot of droll things she must see! You must tell me whether the reception was beautiful. All the men will pay you attention and favour you with allusions to domestic happiness. When the Andalusians are angry, they say: *Mataria el sol á puñaladas si no fuese por miedo de dejar el mundo á oscuras!*

Since September 28, my birthday, an uninterrupted succession of petty misfortunes have assailed me. Besides this, the pain in my chest is worse and I suffer great distress. I shall delay my trip to England until the middle of November. If you are unwilling to see me in London, I must abandon the hope, but I am anxious to see the elections. I shall overtake you soon after in Paris, where chance may bring us together, even if your whim persists in keeping us apart. All your reasons are pitiful, and are not worth the trouble to refute, and all the more since you yourself know that they are worthless.

You are joking, certainly, when you say so

pleasantly that you are afraid of me. You are aware that I am ugly, and have a capricious temper, that I am always absent-minded, and often, when in pain, very irritating and disagreeable. What is there in all that to disturb you? You will never fall in love with me, so rest easy. Your consoling predictions can never be realised. You are not a witch. Now the truth is that my chances of death have increased this year. Do not be anxious about your letters. All letters and papers found in my room shall be burned after my death; but to plague you, I shall bequeath you in my will a manuscript continuation of the *Guzla*, which amused you so much.

You have the qualities of both an angel and a devil, but many more of the latter. You call me a tempter. Dare, if you will, to say that this title does not apply to you far more than to me. Have you not thrown a bait to me, a poor little fish? and now that you have me caught on the end of your hook you keep me dangling between the sky and the sea as long as it amuses you; then, when you grow tired of the game, you will cut the line, I shall drop with the hook in my mouth, and the fisherman will be nowhere to be found.

I appreciate your frankness in confessing

that you read the letter which Mr. V. wrote me and entrusted to your charge. I guessed it, indeed, for since the time of Eve all women are alike in that respect. I wish the letter had been more interesting; but I suppose that, in spite of his spectacles, you consider Mr. V. a man of good taste. I am out of sorts because I am suffering.

I am reminded of your promise to give me a *schizzo*—a promise you would never have given if I had not begged for it—and I feel in better humour. I await the *schizzo* with the greatest patience. Adieu, *niña de mis ojos;* I promise never to fall in love with you. I do not want to be in love ever again, but I should like to have a woman friend. If I should see you often, and you are all I believe you to be, I should become very fond of you, in a truly platonic way. Try, therefore, to arrange it so that we may meet when you come to Paris. Shall I be compelled to wait many long days for a reply? Good-bye again. Pity me, for I am very downcast, and I have a thousand reasons for being so.

VII

Lady M. told me last night that you were going to be married. This being so, burn my letters. I shall burn yours, and then good-bye.

You already know my principles on this question. They do not allow me to continue in friendly relations with a married woman whom I knew as a young girl, with a widow whom I knew as a married woman. I have observed that when the civil status of a woman has changed, one's relations with her have changed also, and always for the worse. In brief, right or wrong, I can not endure that my friends should marry. Therefore, if you are going to be married, let us forget each other. I beg of you not to have recourse to one of your usual evasions, but to answer me frankly.

I declare that since September 28 I have suffered disappointments and vexations of every description. Your marriage was only another of the fatalities that were to fall on me.

One night not long ago, being unable to sleep, I reviewed in my mind all the vexations which have overwhelmed me during the last fortnight, and I found for them all but one compensation, which was your amiable letter, and your equally amiable promise to make me a sketch. Yet now I wish I could stab the sun, as the Andalusians say.

Mariquita de mi vida, (let me call you so until your marriage), I had a superb stone, finely cut, brilliant, sparkling, in every point

perfect. I believed it to be a diamond, which I would not have exchanged for that of the Grand Mogul. Not so at all! It turns out to be but an imitation. A friend of mine, who is a chemist, has just analysed it for me. Fancy my disappointment. I have spent a great deal of time thinking of this imitation diamond, and of my good fortune in having found it. Now I must spend as much time, and more even, in persuading myself that it was not a genuine stone.

All this is only a parable. I took dinner the other evening with the false diamond, and made but a surly appearance. When I am angry I am rather skilful with the rhetorical figure called irony, and so I extolled the good qualities of the diamond in my most bombastic style and with frigid composure. I do not know, I am sure, why I tell you all this, especially since we are soon to forget each other. Meanwhile, I love you still, and commend myself to your prayers —" nymph, in thy orisons be all my sins remembered," etc.

Next Friday your picture will leave by mail, and should certainly reach London by Sunday. You might send for it Tuesday at Mr. V.'s, Pall-Mall.

Forgive the insanity of this letter; my mind is distracted with gloomy thoughts.

VIII

My dear platonic Friend: We are becoming very affectionate. You say to me, *Amigo de mi alma*, which from a woman's lips is very sweet. You give me no news of your health. In your former letter you told me that my platonic friend was ill, and you should have known that I was anxious. Be more definite in future. It is all very well for you to complain of my reticence, you who are mystery incarnate! What more will you have on the story of the diamond, unless it is the name? Details, perhaps; but they would be tiresome to write, and some day they may amuse you, when we shall find nothing to say to each other, seated in our arm-chairs on opposite sides of the chimney corner.

Listen to the dream that I had two nights ago, and if you are sincere, interpret it for me. Methought we were both in Valencia, in a beautiful garden where there was an abundance of oranges, pomegranates, and other fruits. You were seated upon a bench, resting against a hedge. Opposite was a wall about six feet in height, separating this garden from another garden on a much lower level. I was standing

facing you, and it seemed to me that we were speaking to each other in the Valencian tongue. *Nota bene*, that I am able to understand Valencian with much difficulty. What sort of a deuced language is it that one speaks in a dream, when one speaks a language that he does not know? For lack of something else to do, and from habit, I went and stood on a rock, looking over into the garden below. There I saw a bench also with its back against the wall, and seated on this bench was a Valencian gardener playing the guitar, and my diamond was listening. This sight put me instantly in a bad humour, but at first I gave no sign of this. The diamond raised her head, and seemed astonished to see me, but she did not start, or appear otherwise disconcerted.

After a time I stepped down from the stone, and said to you, casually and without mentioning the diamond, that it would be a great joke to throw a big stone over the top of the wall. This stone was very heavy. You were eager to help me, and without asking any questions (which is not natural to you), by dint of pushing we succeeded in placing the stone on the top of the wall, and we were making ready to push it over, when the wall itself gave way and crumbled, and we both fell with the stone and the

débris of the wall. I do not know what happened then, for I awoke. That you may understand the scene better, I enclose a drawing of it. I was unable to see the gardener's face, which is most exasperating.

You are very kind. I have said this to you frequently of late. It was very kind of you to have answered the question that I asked you recently. I need not tell you that your reply pleased me. You have even said, unconsciously, perhaps, several things that have given me pleasure, and especially that the husband of a woman who resembled you would have your sincere sympathy. I can readily believe you, and will add that no one could be more unfortunate unless it were a man who loved you.

You must be cold and sarcastic in your perverse moods, with an insuperable pride which forbids you to acknowledge when you are in the wrong. Add to this your energetic temperament, which compels you to disdain tears and complaints. When in the course of time and of events we become friends, it shall be seen which of us knows better how to torment the other. Only to think of it makes my hair stand on end. Have I interpreted correctly your *but?* Rest assured that, notwithstanding your resolutions, the threads of our lives are too closely inter-

mingled for us to fail to find each other some day or other. I am dying to see and talk with you. It seems to me that I should be perfectly happy if I knew that I should see you this evening.

By the way, you are wrong to suspect Mr. V. of undue curiosity. Even if it were equal to yours, which is not possible, Mr. V. is a Cato, and under no consideration would he break a seal. Therefore send him the *schizzo* under cover, and have no fear of any indiscretion on his part. I should like to see you as you were writing, *Amigo de mi alma.* When you are having your photograph taken for me, say those words to yourself, instead of "prunes and prisms," as ladies say when they wish to give their mouth a pleasant expression.

Try and arrange it so that we may meet without any secrecy and as good friends do. You will be distressed, no doubt, to learn that I am not at all well and am horribly bored. Do come soon to Paris, dear *Mariquita,* and make me fall in love with you. Then I shall be no longer lonely, and in compensation I shall make you very unhappy by my whims. For some time your writing has been very careless and your letters short. I am convinced that you have no love for any one, and never will have

any. However, you understand well enough the theory of love.

Good-bye. You have my best wishes for your health, for your happiness, that you may not marry, that you may come to Paris—in short, that we may become good friends.

IX

Mariquita de mi alma: I am grieved to learn of your indisposition. When this letter reaches you I hope you will have fully recovered your health, and that you will be in a condition to write me longer letters. Your last one was maddeningly brief and stiff, a style of writing to which you formerly accustomed me, but which is now more annoying than you can imagine. Write me a long letter, and tell me all kinds of pleasant things. What is your malady? Have you some vexation to endure, or is it a sorrow? In your last note there are several mysterious phrases, as all your phrases are which intimated this. But between ourselves, I do not believe you have ever known the luxury of that organ called the heart. You have troubles of the mind, pleasures of the mind; but the organ known as the heart is developed only about the twenty-fifth year of age, in the 46th degree of latitude.

You will knit your beautiful black brows at this, and say, "The saucy man doubts that I have a heart!" for this nowadays is the great assumption. Since so many novels and poems of passion, so called, have been written, all women affect to have a heart. Wait a little while. When you have really discovered your heart you will tell me about it; you will recall regretfully these good days when you were ruled only by the mind, and you will realise that the vexations you now suffer are mere pin-pricks compared to the dagger-thrusts that shall overwhelm you when the days of passion shall have come.

I have been grumbling about your letter, but it really contains some very agreeable news: that is, the definite promise, graciously given, to send me your photograph. This gives me great pleasure, not only because I shall then know you better, but especially because it will be a token of your growing confidence in me. I see that I am making progress in your esteem, and congratulate myself. When am I to receive this portrait? Will you give it to me yourself? If so, I will come to receive it. Or will you give it to Mr. V., who will send it to me with all due discretion? Have no fear of either him or his wife. I should prefer to receive it from your own white hand.

I shall start for London early next month. I am going to see the election. I shall also eat some whitebait at Blackwall, look over the cartoons of Hampton Court, and then return to Paris. If I were to see you it would make me very happy, but I dare not hope for it. However that may be, if you will send the sketch under cover to Mr. V. just as you do your letters, I shall receive it promptly, for, if nothing happens, I shall be in London the 8th of December.

I have censured your curiosity and indiscretion in opening Mr. V.'s letter, but to tell you the truth you have some faults that I like, and your curiosity is one of them. If we were to meet often, I am afraid you would take a dislike to me, and that the opposite would happen with me. At this moment I am thinking of the expression on your face. It is a little severe, that of a lioness, though tame.

Adieu. I send a thousand kisses to your mysterious feet.

X

By all means, by all means, send Mr. V. what you have for so long a time led me to expect. Enclose a letter too, a long one, for if you were

to send a letter to Paris I should probably cross it on my way. Caution Mr. V. to take care of the letter and the package, and tell him that I shall call for them in person the last of next week. What would be on your part even more friendly, and what you do not suggest in your letter, would be to tell me when and where I might see you. I am not counting on this, however, and I know you too well to expect any such proof of your courage. I rely on chance only, which may give me some talisman or clew.

I am writing to you lying on a couch, suffering tortures; colour that of a sun-scorched meadow. I refer to my own colour, not that of the couch. You must know that the sea makes me very ill, and that the glad waters of the dark blue sea are pleasant to me only when I watch them from the shore. The first time I went to England I was so ill that it was a fortnight before I regained my usual colour, which is that of the pale horse of the Apocalypse. One day when I was dining opposite to Madam V., she exclaimed suddenly, "Until to-day I thought you were an Indian." Do not be frightened, and do not take me for a ghost.

Forgive me for referring so often to the diamond. What must be the feelings of a man who is not a connoisseur in gems, to whom the jew-

ellers have said, "This stone is an imitation," and who nevertheless sees it sparkle brilliantly; who sometimes says to himself, "Suppose the jewellers are not good judges of diamonds! Suppose they are mistaken, or else wish to deceive me!" I look at my diamond from time to time (as seldom as I can), and every time I see it it seems to me genuine in every respect. What a pity that I am unable myself to make a conclusive chemical analysis! What do you think about it? If I could see you, I should explain what is obscure in this matter, and you would give me some wise advice; or, better still, you would make me forget my diamond, genuine or false, for there is no diamond that can stand comparison with two lovely black eyes.

Good-bye. I have a terrible pain in my left elbow, on which I am leaning to write to you; besides, you do not deserve three closely written pages. You send me only a few lines, carelessly written, and when you write three lines two of them are certain to throw me in a rage.

XI

You are charming, dear *Mariquita,* too charming even. I have just received the *schizzo,* and I now possess both your portrait and your

confidence, a double happiness. You were in an agreeable mood the day you wrote, for your letter was long and kind, but it has one fault, that is, it is indefinite. Shall I see you, or not? That is the question. I know well enough how it may be solved, but you do not want to come to a decision. You are, as you will be all your life, vacillating between your own temperament and the habits you acquired in the convent. That is the cause of all the trouble.

I swear to you that if you will not permit me to call and see you, I shall go to Madam D. and ask her to give me some news of you. In this connection, Madam D. might give you a satisfactory proof of my discretion, for I even resisted the desire which made my fingers tingle to open the package containing the picture. Applaud me.

Why are you unwilling that I should see you on the promenade, for example, or, better still, at the British Museum or the Ingerstein Gallery? I have a friend with me who is exceedingly curious about the large package which I untied while his back was turned, and also about the change in my spirits due to its arrival. I have not told him a word that approaches the truth, but I think he is on the scent.

Good-bye. I wished to tell you of the safe

arrival of the picture, and of the very great pleasure it has given me. Let us write frequently in London, even if we are not to see each other there.

XII

LONDON, *December 10.*

Tell me, in the name of God, "if you are of God," *querida Mariquita*, why you have not answered my letter. Your letter before the last, and especially the picture which accompanied it, threw me into such a flutter that the note I wrote you on the spot did not have any too much common sense. Now that I am calmer, and have had several days in London to refresh my mind, I shall try to reason with you.

Why do you not wish to see me? No one of your friends knows me, and my visit would seem entirely natural. Your principal motive seems to be the dread of doing something *improper*, as they say here. I do not take seriously what you say concerning your fear of losing your illusions upon closer acquaintance with me. If this were the real ground of your hesitation, you would be the first woman, the first human being, whom such a consideration prevented from gratifying her inclination or her curiosity..

Let us consider the impropriety of it. Is the thing improper in itself? No, for nothing is more open and above-board. You know in advance that I shall not eat you. The thing, then, is improper, admitting that it is improper, only in the eyes of society. Observe in passing that this word *society* makes us miserable from the day when we put on clothes that are uncomfortable, because society so orders it, until the day of our death. . . .

In sending me your portrait, it seems to me that you gave me a proof of your faith in my discretion. Why, then, believe in it no longer? A man's good judgment, and mine in particular, is the greater the more is expected of him. This granted, and being fully convinced of my discretion, you may see me, and society will be none the wiser, consequently it can not exclaim at the impropriety. I will even add, with my hand on my heart—that is, on my left side—that so far as I am concerned I see not the slightest impropriety in it. I will say more: if this correspondence is to continue without our ever meeting, it becomes the most absurd thing in the world. All these thoughts I leave to your reflection.

If I were vainer, I should rejoice at what you say of my diamond. But we can never fall

in love—with each other, I mean. Our acquaintance did not begin in a manner to lead to that point: it is far too romantic for that. As for the diamond, my travelling companion, while smoking his cigar, spoke of it without knowing my interest in the matter, and said some very deplorable things. He seems to have no doubt of its falseness. Dear *Mariquita*, you say you would never wish to be a "crown diamond," and you are quite right. You are worth more than that. I offer you a sincere friendship, which, I hope, may some day be of value to us both.

Good-bye.

XIII

PARIS, *February, 1842.*

An hour ago I read your letter, which has been on my table ever since Tuesday, concealed under a pile of papers. Since you did not disdain my gifts, I send you some conserves of roses, jessamine, and bergamot. You might offer a jar of it to Madame de C., with my best respects. It seems that I once offered you a pair of Turkish slippers, and you have persisted in refusing them, so that I should like to send them to you anyway. But since my return I

have been robbed. No sign of any slippers; I can not find them high or low. Will you accept this instead? Perhaps this Turkish mirror will please you better; for you seem to me to be even more coquettish than you were in the year of grace 1840. It was in the month of December, and you wore striped silk stockings. That is all that I remember.

It is for you to decide the protocol of which you speak. You do not believe in my gray hair. Here is a sample in proof of it.

I give nothing without expecting a return. Before you go to Naples, you will be good enough to take my directions and to bring me back what I shall tell you. I might give you a letter to the director of the Pompeiian excavations, if you are interested in such things.

You make of your precious self such a dazzling portrait that I see the time of our next meeting postponed to the Greek Kalends. *Allah kerim!* I am writing in the midst of such an infernal racket that I do not know exactly what I am saying. I have a great many things to say, however, about ourselves, which I shall defer until after I have heard from you. Meanwhile, good-bye, and preserve that splendid bearing, that radiant countenance, which I admired.

XIV

PARIS, *Saturday, March, 1842.*

For two hours I have been trying to decide whether I should write to you. My pride offers many reasons why I should not do so, but although you are perfectly sure, I hope, of the pleasure your letter gave me, I declare I can not refrain from telling you so.

So you are rich; so much the better. I congratulate you. Rich, which is, interpreted, free. Your friend, who had such a happy inspiration, must have been somewhat of an Auld Robin Gray; he was evidently in love with you. You will never confess it, because you are too fond of mystery; but I will forgive you; we write to each other too seldom to quarrel. Why should you not go to Rome and to Naples to enjoy the pictures and the sunshine? You are capable of appreciating Italy, and you will return richer in impressions and ideas.

I do not advise you to visit Greece. Your skin is not tough enough to resist the multitude of hideous creatures that prey on people there. Speaking of Greece, since you take such good care of what is given you, here is a blade of grass which I plucked on the hill of Anthela at Ther-

mopylæ, the place where the last of the three hundred died. This little flower has in its constituent atoms probably a few of the molecules of the late Leonidas. I recollect, besides, that on this very spot, as I lay stretched upon a pile of straw in front of the guard-house (what a profanation!), I spoke of my youth to my friend Ampère, and said that among the tender remembrances which I had preserved there was but one in which there was no touch of bitterness. I was thinking at the time of our beautiful youth. Pray keep my foolish flower.

Tell me, should you like some more substantial souvenir of the Orient? Unfortunately, I have given away all the beautiful things that I brought back with me. I could give you quantities of sandals, but you would wear them for others, thank you. If you wish some conserves of roses and jessamine, I still have a little left, but let me know at once, or I shall eat them all. We hear from each other so seldom that we have a great many things to say concerning ourselves. Here is my history:

I visited my dear Spain again in the fall of 1840. I spent two months in Madrid, where I witnessed a ridiculous revolution, several superb bull-fights, and the triumphal entry of Espartero, which was the most comical parade I ever

saw. I was a guest in the home of an intimate friend who is almost like a dear sister to me. In the morning I went into Madrid, and returned to dine in the country with six women, the oldest of whom was thirty-six. In consequence of the revolution I was the only man at liberty to come and go freely, so that these six unfortunates had no other protector. They spoiled me terribly. I did not fall in love with any of them, as I should perhaps have done. While I did not deceive myself as to the advantages which I owed to the revolution, I found it very agreeable, nevertheless, to be a sultan, even *ad honores*.

On my return to Paris I treated myself to the innocent pleasure of printing a book for private circulation. There were only made a hundred and fifty copies, with superb paper, illustrations, etc., which I presented to people whom I liked. I should offer you this rare book if you were worthy of it; but I must warn you that it is a historical and pedantic work, so bristling with Greek and Latin, nay, even with Oscan (do you even know what Oscan is?), that you could not so much as nibble at it.

Last summer I happened to fall on a little money. My minister gave me three months' holiday, and I spent five running about from

Malta to Athens and from Ephesus to Constantinople. During these five months I was not bored for five minutes. What would have become of you, to whom I was once such an object of terror, if you had met me during my Asiatic journey, with a belt of pistols, a huge sword, and—would you believe it?—a moustache that extended beyond my ears! Without intending any flattery, I should have struck fear into the heart of the boldest brigand of melodrama. At Constantinople I saw the Sultan, in patent-leather boots, and a frock-coat, and again, afterwards, covered with diamonds in the procession of the *Baïram*. On the same occasion, a handsome woman, on whose toe I had stepped by accident, slapped me severely and called me a *giaour*. This constituted my only intercourse with the Turkish beauties. At Athens, and in Asia, I saw the most splendid monuments in the world, and the loveliest landscapes possible to imagine.

The only drawback consisted in fleas and gnats as big as larks; consequently I never slept. Meanwhile, I have grown old. My passport describes me as having turtle locks, which is a pleasant Oriental metaphor for saying all sorts of disagreeable things. Picture to yourself your friend as quite gray. And you, *querida*, have

you changed? I am waiting impatiently until you become less pretty, so that I may see you. In two or three years from now, when you write to me, tell me what you are doing and when we are to see each other. Your "respectful remembrance" made me laugh, and also that you should presume to dispute its place in my heart with Ionic and Corinthian columns.

In the first place, I do not care for any but the Doric, and there are no columns, not even excepting those of the Parthenon, which can be compared to the memory of an old friendship. Good-bye; go to Italy, and be happy. I start to-day for Evreux, on a matter of business, expecting to return Monday night. If you wish to eat rose leaves, say so; but I warn you there is only a spoonful left for you.

XV

PARIS, *Monday night, March, 1842.*

I have just received your letter, which has put me in a bad humour. So it is your satanic pride which has kept you from seeing me. It is not for me to reproach you, however, for I think I saw you the other day, and was restrained from speaking to you by a feeling quite as paltry. You say you are better than you were

two years ago. It is very well for you to say that. I admit that you are more beautiful, but, on the other hand, you seem to have absorbed a good dose of selfishness and hypocrisy. These may be very useful, but they are not qualities for one to brag about. As for me, I have become neither better nor worse; I am not more of a hypocrite than I was, and I may be wrong. Certain it is that I am not loved more on this account.

Since this purse was not embroidered by your own fair hand, what do you wish me to do with it? You ought, indeed, to give me some of your own work; my mirror and my conserves deserve that much. You might at least have told me whether you received them. When you go to Italy, and pass through Paris, you will probably not find me here. Where shall I be? The devil only knows. It is not impossible that I may meet you at the *Studj;* but then, again, I may go to Saragossa to see that woman of whom you say that you are worth as much as she. As for a sister, there will be no other than herself. Tell me, therefore, and that before you leave for Paris, when you expect to go to Naples, and whether you will take charge of a volume for M. Buonuicci, the Director of the Pompeiian excavations. When I go away I shall leave

this volume either with Madame de C. or elsewhere.

I recall having seen, a long time ago, a Madame de C. at a house where there were some theatricals, in which I played the part of the fool. Ask her if she remembers me.

Good-bye now, and for a long time, no doubt. I am sorry not to have seen you. Write to me now and then. It will always be a great pleasure to hear from you, even though you continue the beautiful system of hypocrisy upon which you have entered so triumphantly. I will commend you to Buonuicci, you and your society, as greatly interested in archæology. You will be pleased with his cordiality.

XVI

PARIS, *Saturday, May 14, 1842.*

You will know, in the first place, that I am not burned to death. "The railway accident on the left bank of the Seine!" It is thus that we have begun our letters in Paris for the last four days. In the next place, I will say that your letter has given me a great deal of pleasure. I found it here on my return from a short trip I have just taken on business; that is why I have been so long in replying. To be frank—

and you are aware that I have not yet overcome this fault—I will admit that you have become much more beautiful physically, but not morally. You have an exquisite complexion, and lovely hair, to which I paid more attention than to your bonnet; and this was probably worthy of notice, since you seemed irritated at my failure to appreciate it. But I have never been able to distinguish lace from calico. You still have a sylphlike figure, and, although I am somewhat *blasé* concerning black eyes, I have never seen any so large in Constantinople or in Smyrna.

Now comes the reverse of the medal. In many respects you have remained a child, and you have become a hypocrite in the bargain. You have not learned how to conceal your first impulses, but you think you can reconcile them by having recourse to a variety of petty means. What do you expect to gain thereby? Do not forget that great and beautiful maxim of Jonathan Swift: That a lie is too good a thing to be lavished about! Your magnanimous idea of being severe on yourself will carry you far, no doubt, and a few years hence you will find yourself in the happy condition of the Trappist, who, after torturing himself again and again, should discover one day that, after all, heaven has no existence.

I do not know to what promise you refer, and there are also many other obscure passages in your letter. We can never bear the same relations to each other that exist between Madame de X. and myself; the first condition in the attitude between a brother and sister being unlimited confidence, and in this respect Madame de X. has spoiled me.

I am silly enough to grieve over that scarf-pin, but I am consoled at the thought that you also are sorry for it. This is still another beautiful trait in your character. How flattered your stoicism must have been at this victory over yourself! You imagine that you are proud, but I regret to tell you that what you think is pride is only the petty vanity which one would expect in a religious temperament. It is the fashion nowadays to preach. Shall you follow it? That would be the finishing stroke. I must drop this subject, for it always puts me in a bad humour.

I think I shall not go to Saragossa. I may go possibly to Florence; but I have quite decided to spend two months in the south of France, examining churches and Roman ruins. We may run across each other, perhaps, in some temple or circus. I advise you strongly to go straight to Naples. If you should have to wait five or six hours at Leghorn, however, you might

employ them better by going to Pisa to see the Campo Santo. I advise you to see The Dead, by Orcagna, the *Vergonzoso*, and an antique bust of Julius Caesar. At Civita Vecchia you need see only M. Bucci, from whom you will want to buy some very old gems. You must give him my compliments. Then you will go on to Naples. You will stop at The Victoria, where you will spend several days drinking in the air, and watching the sky and the sea. You will go now and then to visit the studios. M. Buonuicci will take you to Pompeii. You will go to Paestum, and there you must think of me. When you stand in the temple of Neptune, you may say to yourself that you have seen Greece.

From Naples you will go to Rome, where you will spend a month persuading yourself that it is useless to try to see it all, because you shall return there in the future. Then you will go to Florence, and remain there ten days. After that you will do what you like. When you come to Paris, you will find the book for M. Buonuicci and my final instructions. At that time I shall probably be at Arles or at Orange. If you should stop there, be sure and inquire for me, and I will show you an ancient theatre, which will not interest you especially.

You promised me something in return for

my Turkish mirror. I rely implicitly on your memory. Ah, I have great news for you! The first of the forty Academicians to die will occasion me to make thirty-nine calls. Of course I shall be as awkward as possible, and no doubt I shall make thirty-nine enemies. It would take too long to explain the reasons for this attack of ambition. Enough that the Academy is now the goal of my aspirations.

Good-bye. I will write again before leaving. Be happy, but bear in mind this maxim, that one should never do foolish things unless they please you. Perhaps the precept of M. de Talleyrand is more to your taste, that one should beware of first impulses, because they are usually honest.

XVII

PARIS, *June 22, 1842.*

Your letter has been tardy in coming, and I became impatient. I must reply at once to the principal points. First, I received your purse. It exhaled a most aristocratic perfume, and is very pretty. If you embroidered it yourself, it does you credit. But I have recognised in it your newly acquired taste for the practical: in the first place, it is a purse to hold money; next,

you valued it at a hundred francs at the stage-coach. It would have been more poetical to declare that it was worth one or two stars. All the same, I prize it quite as highly. I will put my medals in it. I should have cared more for it if you had condescended to put in it a few lines from your fair hand.

Secondly, I do not care for your pheasants. You offer them in a disagreeable fashion, and, besides, you say unpleasant things to me about my Turkish conserves. It is you who have the taste of a heretic, if you are unable to appreciate what the houris eat.

I believe I have answered everything that was sensible in your letter. I will not quarrel about the rest. I abandon you to your own conscience, which, I am sure, is sometimes even more severe than I, whom you accuse of harshness and indifference. The hypocrisy which you practise so well in sport, will play you a trick some day —that is, it will become natural to you. As for coquetry, the inseparable companion of the horrid vice which you extol, you have always indulged in it. It became you very well when it was softened by frankness, warm-heartedness, and imagination, but now—now, what shall I say?

You have beautiful raven hair, a lovely blue

cashmere, and you are always charming when you wish to be. Say that I do not spoil you! As for that essence of which you speak, it is your own kindness which you thus designate. I like that word *essence;* yes, the real essence of roses, which is always frozen like that of Adrianople. I will tell you this Oriental story.

There was once a dervish who seemed to a baker to be a saint. The baker one day promised to give him white bread the rest of his life. At this the dervish was enchanted. But after awhile the baker said to him, "We agreed on brown bread, did we not? I have first-class brown bread. It is my specialty, is brown bread." The dervish replied, "I have already more brown bread than I can eat, but——"

Right here my cat jumped on the table, and I have had all I could do to keep her from lying down on my paper. She has made me forget the rest of the story, which is a pity, for it was very pretty. Do you know that, with my other air-castles, I have built this one: to meet you in Marseilles in September, to show you the lions there, and have you eat figs and fish soup. But I am obliged to be in Paris by August 15, to write a report for my minister; consequently, you will eat fish soup by yourself, and you will visit the Museum and the caves of Saint-Victor

without me. On the other hand, when you reach Paris you may, if you like, receive from my own hand the directions I have made for your trip to Italy.

Since your wishes always are realised, I pray you humbly to wish that I may become an Academician. This would be a great gratification to me, provided that you were not present at my reception. However, you have abundant time for the realisation of your wishes. It will be necessary for an epidemic to break out among those gentlemen before my chances are advanced; and to improve them, I should be obliged to borrow a little of that hypocrisy in which you are now so skilled. I am too old to reform; if I should try, I should be still worse than I am at present.

I am curious to know what you think of me, but how shall I ever find it out? You will never tell me, either the best or the worst that you think. Formerly I had not much of an opinion of my precious self, but now I have a little more self-esteem; not that I think I have improved, but it is the world that has grown worse.

In a week I start for Arles, where I intend to drive out a lot of beggars who live in the old theater. A fine occupation, is it not? It would be kind of you, before I go, to send me a letter

brimful of sweet things. I am fond of being spoiled; besides, I am horribly sad and discouraged. I must tell you that I am spending my evenings revising my books, which are to be reprinted. I find them very immoral, and sometimes stupid. I am trying to reduce the immorality and the stupidity without going to too much trouble. The consequence is, a bad attack of the blue devils. I say good-bye, and kiss your hands must humbly. Can you guess what I found among my papers? A short blue thread, twice knotted. I have put it away in the purse.

XVIII

CHÂLON-SUR-SAÔNE, *June 30, 1842.*

You guessed correctly the end of the story: the dervish was imposed upon by the baker, but, all the same, the holy man did not like brown bread.

I am in a city which is particularly odious to me, alone in an inn, listening to a frightful south-east wind. It parches everything it touches, and the harmonies produced as it whistles down the corridors are enough to bring the devil up to earth. The result is that I am furious with all nature. I am writing to you in order to cheer me a little, and I am comforted

by the thought that in your approaching journey you will have many such days as this. I saw in Saint Vincent's church an exceedingly pretty young girl making stations. Isn't that what you call the prayers, or something of the sort, that are said before a series of pictures representing the principal scenes of the Passion? Her mother was near, watching over her with strict attention. While taking notes on ancient Byzantine columns, I asked myself what this young girl could have done to merit such a penance. The case must have been one of deep gravity.

Have you become deeply pious, following the general fashion of the day? You must be pious for the same reason that you must wear a blue cashmere. I should be sorry, however, if this were so. Our piety here in France is repugnant to me. It is a sort of mediocre philosophy, which springs not from the heart, but from the mind. When you have seen the devotion of the common people in Italy, you will agree with me, I hope, that theirs is the only genuine religion; only one must be born beyond the Alps or the Pyrenees to believe this.

You can not conceive of the disgust which I feel for our society of the present day. One would suppose that it has tried in every way pos-

sible to add to the burden of suffering necessary to the management of society. I shall await your return from Italy; you will have seen there a state of society where, on the contrary, everything contributes to render existence more agreeable and more tolerable. We shall then resume our discussions on the subject of hypocrisy, and it is possible that we shall come to an understanding.

I have spent almost the entire winter studying mythology from old Latin and Greek archives. It has proved to be extremely entertaining, and if there should ever come into your head the desire to know the record of the thoughts of men, which is vastly more interesting than the history of their deeds, inquire of me, and I will recommend three or four books for your reading which will make you as wise as I—and this is saying no little!

How are you employing your time? I sometimes ask myself this question, without being able to give a satisfactory answer. If I had to cast your horoscope I should predict that you would end by writing a book; it is the inevitable result of the sort of life you lead, and which all the women of France are leading. First, there is imagination, and sometimes affection; then follows hypocrisy, after which one attains to the

pious stage; and finally, one becomes an author. God grant that you may never reach that point!

I hope to see Madame de M. in Paris this year. If she comes, I should like to have you meet her. You would then discover that brown bread is more difficult to make than you seem to think. If you are willing, nothing will be easier than to make the acquaintance of this baker.

Good-bye. The wind continues to blow. I am obliged to remain a month in the country, and if you have any time to spare, and wish to give me a great deal of pleasure, you have only to write to me at Avignon, where I shall call for your letter.

XIX

AVIGNON, *July 20, 1842.*

Since you take that view of it, upon my word, I capitulate. Give me brown bread; it is better than none at all. Only, allow me to say that it is brown, and continue to write to me. You will observe how humble and submissive I am!

Your letter reached me when I was steeped in melancholy, caused by the sad news of the death of the duc d'Orleans, which I had just learned upon returning from a trip into the

mountains. I was sadly in need of a letter of another character; such as it was, your letter has at any rate proved a diversion.

I shall reply to it item by item. The figure of rhetoric of which you think yourself the inventor, has been known for a long time. With the aid of Greek, one might give it a new and whimsical name. In French it is called by the less stately name of a lie. Employ it with me as little as you can. Do not overtax it with others. It should be kept for unusual occasions. Do not make too great an effort to find the world silly and ridiculous. It is, alas! only too much so. You ought, on the contrary, to endeavour to imagine it as it is not. It is better to have too many illusions than not to have any at all. I still have a few, some of which are not very sound, but I make strenuous efforts to retain them.

Your story is very familiar. "There was once an idol." Read Daniel; but he was mistaken—the head was not of gold; it was of clay, like the feet. But the idolater held a lamp in his hand, and the reflection from this lamp gilded the idol's head. If I were the idol (you will observe that I do not on this occasion assume the attractive rôle), I should say: "Is it my fault that you have extinguished your lamp? Is

that any excuse for destroying me?" It seems to me that I am becoming somewhat of an Oriental. So be it!

If you knew Madame de M. you would love her to distraction. She does not give me white bread, but she gives me something that takes its place. She is not a baker's wife; she is a baker.

I grieve to see that you are becoming more and more affected. I am fully informed about your piety. I thank you for your prayers, if you do not mean them for a figure of speech. As to your blue cashmere, I am rather sceptical of your piety, because piety in 1842 is a fashion, just as blue cashmeres are. You will fail to understand the connection, but it is perfectly clear notwithstanding.

I regret very much that you are reading Pope's translation of Homer. Read the translation of Dugas Montbel, which is the only one worth reading. If you had the courage to brave ridicule, and time to spare, you would get Planche's Greek Grammar and his Dictionary. For a month the grammar would put you to sleep, but its effect would be seen later. After two months you would enjoy looking up the Greek words, translated usually almost literally by M. Montbel. Two months later still you would be able to guess fairly well, by the awk-

wardness of his expression, when the translator has failed to reproduce clearly the Greek phrase. By the end of a year you would read Homer as you read a melody with its accompaniment: the melody being the Greek, the accompaniment the translation. It is possible that you might then wish to study Greek seriously, in which case you would have the pleasure of reading many delightful books.

But I am supposing that your time is not absorbed in the selection of toilettes, or in displaying them before your friends. Everything in Homer is remarkable. The epithets, which in the French translation seem so strange, are wonderfully correct. I remember that he speaks of the sea as purple. I never understood what he meant until last summer, when I was in a little boat on the Gulf of Lepanto, going to Delphi. It was just at sunset. Immediately afterwards, the sea took on a magnificent deep violet tint, which lasted for ten minutes. To see this effect requires the atmosphere, the sea, and the sun of Greece. I hope that you will never become enough of an artist to recognise with pleasure that Homer was a great painter.

The final words of your letter are full of enigmas. You tell me that you will write to me no more, which would be a great misfortune.

However, I yield to your decision, and you will hear nothing more from me except compliments. I believe I have already addressed to you several of these. You solicit one, I imagine, when you say you have neither feeling nor imagination. By continually denying their existence you may bring ill luck on yourself. One should not trifle with such things. But I have an idea that you intended only to try the experiment of your rhetorical figure on me. Fortunately I know how much to believe.

If you can think of anything pleasant to say to me, you might write. I shall remain here for a fortnight still. I want to add one word about the life I am leading, tramping the fields without meeting any other obstacle than rocks. Farewell. I hope you find me this time sufficiently submissive and well-behaved, *Signora Fornarina?*

XX

PARIS, *August 27, 1842.*

I find awaiting me here a letter which is not so fierce as your recent ones have been. You might have sent it to me down there. Such a rare treat could not be too soon received. I hasten to congratulate you on your Greek

studies, and to begin with something that interests you, I will tell you what in Greek are called persons who, like you, have hair of which they are justly proud. It is *euplokamos*. *Eu* means well, *plokamos*, a curl of hair. The two words together form an adjective. Homer has said somewhere: *νυμφη δε εὐπλοκαμοῦσα Καλυψώ*, *Calypso, nymph of the luxuriant tresses.* Is it not very pretty? Ah! for the love of Greek, etc.

I regret exceedingly that you start so late in the season for Italy. You run the risk of seeing everything through odious rain-storms, which deprive the most beautiful mountains in the world of half their splendour; and you will be obliged to take my word for it when I praise the radiant skies of Naples. Neither will you have any good fruit to eat, but must content yourself instead with fig-eaters, birds so called because they live on figs.

I do not at all agree with your version of the parable.

On my return I had an adventure which mortified me not a little, since it showed me the sort of reputation I enjoy with the public. I was packing my luggage at Avignon, preparing to start for Paris, when there entered the room two venerable figures who introduced themselves as members of the Municipal Council. I

supposed they had come for the purpose of talking about some church, when they announced pompously and verbosely that their visit had as its object to commend to my honour and to my virtue a lady who was to be my travelling companion. I replied, very peevishly, that they need have no fears concerning my honour and my virtue, but that I was not at all pleased to travel with a woman, for I should then not be able to smoke on the road.

Upon the arrival of the stage-coach I found within a woman, tall and pretty, simply and stylishly dressed, who said she was ill, and despaired of ever reaching Paris alive. We entered into conversation. I was as polite and agreeable as it is possible to be when I am compelled to remain long in the same position. My companion talked intelligently and with no Marseilles accent. She was an ardent Bonapartist, of very enthusiastic temperament; she believed in the immortality of the soul, not overmuch in the catechism, and was on the whole an optimist. I could not help feeling that she had a certain fear of me.

At Saint Etienne the two seated britzska was exchanged for a double carriage. We had the four seats to ourselves, and consequently twenty-four hours of *tête-à-tête* in addition to the pre-

ceding thirty. But although we chatted (what a pretty word!) unintermittingly, I was unable to learn anything of my opposite neighbour, except that she was going to be married, and that she was excellent company. To come to the point, we took on, at Moulins, two uncongenial travellers, and finally reached Paris, where my mysterious lady precipitated herself into the arms of a very ugly man who must have been her father. I took off my cap to her, and was about to get into a cab, when my unknown, leaving her father, came up to me and in a voice full of emotion, said:

"I am deeply touched, sir, by your kindness to me. I can not tell you how grateful I am. Never shall I forget the happiness I have had in travelling with such a *celebrated* man." I am quoting her words. But this word *celebrated* explained the Municipal Councillors and the trepidation of the lady. They had evidently seen my name on the post-office register, and the lady, who had read my books, expected to be swallowed alive. This most unjust opinion of me must be shared, doubtless, by more than one of my lady readers. What ever put it into your head to want to know me? I was in a bad humour for two days following this incident; then I resigned myself to it. It is a remarkable fact,

that after I became a great scamp I lived for two years on my former good reputation; but now that I have entirely reformed I still pass for a scapegrace.

As a fact, my wild life lasted but three years, and even then my heart was not in it. I threw myself into dissipation not from inclination, but partly from despondency, and partly, perhaps, out of curiosity. I am afraid, however, that this fact will injure my chances for membership in the Academy. I am criticised, also, for not being religious, and for not going to church. I might act the hypocrite, but I should not know how to go about it, and, besides, I should not have the patience.

If you are astonished that all the goddesses are fair, you will be still more astonished at Naples when you see statues with the hair coloured red. It seems that it was the fashion, formerly, for ladies to use red powder, nay, even gold powder. On the other hand, you will see in the paintings at the studios many goddesses with black hair. It is difficult for me to decide which colour I prefer. Only, I advise you not to powder your hair. There is a terrible Greek word which signifies black hair. *Melanchaites* (Μελαγχαίτης); this χα has a diabolical sound.

I shall remain in Paris all the fall, I fancy,

hard at work on a moral book, which will be about as amusing as the social war in which you will engage in Naples. Good-bye. You promised me some words of affection, and while I am still waiting for them, I am not very sanguine of receiving them.

You used to admire my wealth of antique gems. Alas! the other day I lost my most beautiful one, a magnificent Juno, while doing a kind act; that is, while carrying home a drunken man who had fractured his thigh. And that stone was an Etruscan. Juno held a scythe, and there is no other monument where she is so represented. Do sympathise with me!

XXI

You write charmingly in Greek, and much more legibly than you write in French. But who is your Greek teacher? You can not make me believe that you have learned to write that running hand from a book only. Who is the professor of rhetoric at D.?

Your letter is very gracious. I say this because I know that you enjoy compliments, and also because it is true. As I shall never learn, however, to correct my unfortunate habit of saying what I think to people who are not *all the*

world to me, you may as well know that I see you are making rapid progress in wickedness, and that I am grieved thereby. You are becoming ironical, sarcastic, and even diabolical. All these words are, as you know, taken from the Greek, and your professor will explain to you what I mean by diabolical; διάβολος, that is, calumniator. You ridicule my best qualities, and even when you praise me you do so with reservations and hesitations which rob the praise of all its worth.

It is a fact that at one time in my life I frequented bad society, but I was attracted to it through curiosity only, and I was always there as a stranger in a strange country. As for good society, I have found it often enough deadly tiresome. There are two places where I am at ease, at least, where I flatter myself I am in my proper element: first, among unpretentious people whom I have known for a long time; secondly, in a Spanish venta, with mule-drivers and Andalusian peasants. Write this in my funeral oration, and you will have told the truth.

If I mention my funeral oration, it is because I believe it is time for you to compose it. I have been seriously ill for a long time, and especially for the last two weeks. I have attacks of dizziness, spasms of pain, and frightful headaches.

Something terrible must have happened to my brain, and I fancy that before long I may become, as Homer says, a companion of the shadowy Proserpine. I should like to know what you would say then. I should be charmed if you were to grieve for two weeks. Do you think this is too much to ask?

I am spending part of the night writing, or else in tearing up what I wrote the night before, consequently I make slow progress. What I am writing interests me, but the question is, Will it interest the public? I consider the ancients far more interesting than ourselves; they had no such paltry aims, nor were they so engrossed as we are in a multitude of silly trifles. I find that my hero, Julius Caesar, at the age of fifty-three, committed all sorts of follies for the sake of Cleopatra, forgetting all else for her; this is why he came so near drowning, both literally and figuratively. What man of our century, among our statesmen, I mean, who is not completely callous, completely heartless, by the time he aspires to a seat in the Senate? I should like to explain the difference between that age and our own, but how shall I do it?

Have you come to a passage in the *Odyssey* that I consider wonderful? It is where Ulysses is living with Alcinoüs, still unknown, and after

dinner a poet comes before him and sings of the war of Troy. The little that I have seen of Greece gives me a clearer understanding of Homer. Everywhere throughout the *Odyssey* is seen that amazing love cherished by the Greeks for their native land. There is in modern Greek a charming word: it is *ξενιτεία*, an alien. To be in a strange land is for a Greek the greatest of misfortunes, but to die there is the most terrible calamity of which they can conceive.

You scoff at my epicureanism. Have you ever tried to imagine the nature of the entrails which the Greek heroes ate with such relish? The modern philosophers still eat them: they are called *κονκουρέτζι*, and are simply delicious. There are little wooden skewers made of the fragrant wood of the mastic tree, with something crisp and spicy around them, which makes one readily understand why the priests used to reserve for themselves this dainty morsel from their victims.

Good-bye. If I were to pursue this subject, you would think me more of a glutton than I am. I have no appetite at all, and nothing in the way of little delicacies can any longer tempt me. This means that I am only fit to throw to the crows. There will be deuced weather all through October, and that will finish me!

XXII

PARIS, *October 24, 1842.*

You are exceedingly kind to leave me in ignorance of that part of the globe which is so fortunate as to possess you. Shall I address this letter to Naples, or to . . ., or even to Paris? In your last letter you say that you are about to start for Paris, perhaps for Italy, and since then not a single word of news. I have a suspicion that you are here, and that you will inform me of the fact after you have left; this will be highly in character.

Since writing to you I went away for several days, when, upon my return, I found your letter, dated so long ago that I thought it useless to send an answer to . . . I marvel greatly that you have learned without assistance to write the Greek characters, as you say you have. If you will only be a little patient, with such talent as yours you will become a second Madame Dacier. For my own part, I no longer take any interest either in Greek or in French; I have fallen into a fossil state, and whether I read or write, the letters dance up and down before my eyes in a most disagreeable way.

You ask if there are any Greek romances.

Certainly there are, but in my opinion they are very tiresome. You might procure a translation of *Theagenia and Charicleia*, which the late Racine liked so well. Try to swallow it, if you can. There is also *Daphnis and Chloe*, translated by Courier. The latter is affectedly artless, and none too meritorious. Finally, there is an admirable story, but it is very, very immoral. I refer to *The Ass*, by Lucian, also translated by Courier. No one ever admits that he has read it, but it is his masterpiece. About that you must decide for yourself. I wash my hands of the responsibility.

The trouble with the Greeks is that their ideas of decency, and even of morality, were very different from ours. There are many things in their literature which might shock, nay, even disgust you if you understood them. After reading Homer, you can take up confidently the tragedy writers, who will amuse you, and whom you will enjoy because you have a taste for the beautiful, a sentiment which the Greeks possessed in the highest degree, and which a happy few of us inherit from them.

If you have the courage to undertake history, you will be charmed with Herodotus, Polybdus, and Xenophon. I find Herodotus enchanting, and know of nothing more entertaining. Begin

with *The Anabasis*, or with the *Retreat of the Ten Thousand*. Take a map of Asia, and follow the course of these ten thousand rascals in their journey. It is a gigantic Froissard. Then read Herodotus, and finally *Polybdus and Thucydides*. The last two are very serious. Procure also a copy of Theocritus, and read *The Syracusans*. I would recommend also Lucian, who is the wittiest of all the Greek writers, according to our standards of wit, but he is very wicked, and so I dare not.

Here are three pages of Greek. As for the pronunciation, if you wish, I will send you a page which I prepared especially for you. It will teach you the best method, that is, the pronunciation used by modern Greeks. The classical is easier, but it is absurd.

We began our correspondence by telling jokes, then we did what? I shall not remind you. And now we are becoming erudite. There is a Latin proverb which eulogises the happy medium. When I began to write I intended to say all sorts of severe things, and it is to Greek that you owe the absolute sweetness of my letter. It is not that I bear you less ill-will for your persistent insincerity, only, while writing, I have lost some of my bad humour. If you are not in Italy, do not regret it. The weather there

is frightful, with rain, cold, etc. Nothing is more hideous than a land which is not accustomed to these two plagues. Good-bye. I should be very glad to know where you are. Ἐρρῶσο (grow strong).

This is the end of a Greek letter.

P.S.—Opening a book, I have found these two little flowers, which I plucked at Thermopylæ, upon the hilltop where Leonidas died. It is a relic, as you see.

XXIII

Thursday, October, 1842.

Should you like to hear an Italian opera with me to-night? I have a box on Thursdays with my cousin and his wife. They are now travelling, and I have the box to myself. You should come accompanied by your brother, or by one of your relatives who does not know me. You would please me greatly by coming. Send me a line before six o'clock, and I will let you know the number of the box. I think *La Cenerentola* will be given. Invent some pretty fiction, which you must tell me in advance, to explain my presence; but manage it so that I may speak with you there.

XXIV

Friday morning, October, 1842.

I thank you very much for having come yesterday. You gave me a great deal of pleasure. I hope your brother saw nothing extraordinary in our meeting. I have an Etruscan seal for you; I can not endure the one you are using. I will give you the other the next time I see you. I enclose the page of Greek which I prepared for you. When you have a relapse into an erudite mood it may be of use.

XXV

Tuesday night, October, 1842.

I have lost nothing, as it seems, by waiting for your letter. It is studiously perverse; but believe me, perverseness is not becoming to you. Abandon this style, and resume your customary coquetry, which suits you marvellously.

It would be nothing short of cruelty on my part to wish to see you, since this would cause you to be so ill that it would require an enormous quantity of cakes to cure you. I can not imagine where you have conceived the idea that I have friends in the four corners of the globe. You

know perfectly well that I have only one or two friends in Madrid. Believe me, I am very grateful for the kindness you showed me at the Italian opera the other night. I appreciate, as I should, your condescension in letting me see your face for two hours; and truth compels me to say that I admired it extremely, as I did your hair also, which I had never seen so closely before.

As for your assertion that you have never refused me anything that I asked, you will have to remain several million years in purgatory for that pretty fib. I see that you are anxious to have my Etruscan stone, and as I am more magnanimous than you, I shall not say, like Leonidas, "Come and take it!" but I shall ask you again how you wish me to send it to you.

I have no recollection of comparing you to Cerberus; yet both have, indeed, several points of resemblance, not only because, like him, you love tarts, but also because you have three heads. I mean to say three brains; one, that of a shocking coquette; another, that of an experienced diplomatist; the third I shall not tell you, because I am not going to say anything amiable to you to-day. I am very ill and miserable on account of several misfortunes that have descended on my head. If you have any influence

with Destiny, pray him to treat me kindly for the next two or three months. I have just been to see *Frédégonde*, which bored me to death, in spite of Mademoiselle Rachel, who has magnificent black eyes, without any white, like the devil's, they say.

XXVI

PARIS, *Tuesday night.*

I do not understand you, and I am tempted to believe you to be the very worst of coquettes. Your former letter, in which you tell me that you no longer know me, put me in a bad humour, and I have not replied to it promptly. You say, also, with a great deal of civility, that you do not care to see me, for fear of becoming tired of me. Unless I am mistaken, we have seen each other six or seven times in six years, and if we add together the minutes, we may have passed three or four hours together, half the time saying nothing. However, we are well enough acquainted for you to have learned to like me a little, the proof of which you gave me Thursday. We know each other really better than people who meet in society, considering the length of time we have conversed in our letters with a certain amount of freedom.

Confess, then, that it is scarcely flattering to my self-esteem that now, after an acquaintance of six years, you should treat me thus. Nevertheless, as I have no means of overcoming your resolutions, it shall be as you wish in this case, but I think it is rather silly not to see each other. I beg your pardon for using this word which is neither polite nor friendly, but which, in my opinion at least, is unfortunately true.

I did not in any way ridicule you the other evening; on the contrary, I thought you extremely self-possessed. As for the antique seal, you shall see an impression from it on this letter, and it is subject to your orders, when you have told me where I shall give it to you—no, how you wish it sent to you. Let us not offend the eternal fitness of things.

I ask nothing from you in exchange, for the reason that everything I have asked you have refused me. If you consider it wrong to see me, is it not wrong, also, to write to me? As I am not very proficient in your catechism, there is some confusion in my mind on this point. I speak too harshly, perhaps, but you have wounded my feelings, and when I am unhappy I can not escape from it, as you can, by devouring cakes. In truth, that is quite worthy of Cerberus.

XXVII

PARIS, *Saturday, November, 1842.*

Das Lied des Claerchens gefällt mir zu gar; aber warum haben Sie nicht das Ende geschrieben?

The interest which you manifest in that Etruscan stone is truly delightful to see! How many cakes do you think it is worth? You have never even asked about the inscription it bears. It is a man turning a ewer. I should say an amphora, which is a Greek word and more high-sounding. In former times, perhaps, the seal belonged to a potter; there is, indeed, a mythological allusion which I might explain to you if I would. As for the other seal, it has a strange history. I found it in the chimney-place, as I was poking the fire, in the rue d'Alger; it is a very large, heavy bronze ring, and the characters on it are mystical. It is supposed to have been used by a magician, or even by the gnostics. You have noticed on it a small man, a sun, a moon, etc. Is it not a curious thing to find in the ashes in the rue d'Alger? Who knows if it is not to the mysterious power of this ring that I owe your song of *Claire?*

I am really ill, but that is no reason why I

should not go out. If, for instance, you wished to receive the Etruscan ring from my own hand, I would give it to you with the greatest pleasure; while it would be conspicuous and cause gossip if I should send it in a letter by your bearer. But I do not want to ask anything more from you, for you become more despotic every day, and you have acquired the most odious subtleties of coquetry. It appears that you do not appreciate eyes without any white, and that you admire blue-white eyes. You take good care, also, to remind me of your own eyes, which I remember quite well, although I have seen them so seldom.

Who has taught you this peculiarity, which you dare to tell me you did not know? Was it your Greek teacher, or your German teacher? Or am I to believe that you learned by yourself to write German script, as you did the Greek? Another article of faith to add to your aversion to mirrors! You ought to cultivate a German flower called *die Aufrichtigkeit.*

I have just written the word *End* at the close of a piece of very learned writing, which I composed in the worst possible humour; it remains to be seen whether this word does not signify dulness and prolixity. However, now that it is finished, I feel relieved of a burden

and much happier, which explains my blandness and amiability towards you; otherwise I should have told you some sharp truths about yourself.

You should see me, if it were only to escape from the atmosphere of flattery in which you live. We must go some day to the Museum to see the Italian paintings. It would be a compensation for the journey you failed to take, and to have me for a guide is an inestimable privilege. This is not a condition on which I shall give you my Etruscan stone. Say how, and you shall have it.

XXVIII

PARIS, *November, 1842.*

M. de Montrond says that we should beware of our first impulses, because they are usually trustworthy. One would suppose that you had given much consideration to this beautiful maxim, for you practise it with rare constancy. When a good resolution occurs to you, you postpone it indefinitely. If I were at Civita Vecchia I should seek among the gems of my good friend Bucci for some Etruscan Minerva; it would be the most appropriate seal for you. Meanwhile, my potter is all ready, and I still

say, like Leonidas: Μολὼν λαβέ. I think I shall keep it for some time still, until the eve of your departure.

I must tell you that I am feeling much better, and am less a prey to the blue devils. I find pleasure even in my work, which I have not done for a long time. I am forming great plans for the winter, which is a sign of better spirits. This is why I write so cheerfully, for if I had written immediately after receiving your German letter I should have criticised your faults in my most severe style. You will not be deprived of this even now, because if I see the world to-day through rose-coloured glasses, that is all the more reason why they will soon reflect a darker hue.

I should be glad to know what you are doing, and how you occupy your time. When I see you so learned in Greek and in German, I conclude that you are very lonely at . . ., and that you are spending your life among your books, with some wise professors to explain them to you. Yet I wonder whether it is not otherwise in Paris, and I fancy the days there passed in amusements of another kind. If I had not lived so long in the strictest solitude, I should know all about your actions and movements, and the reports that I should hear would give me

an impression of you very unlike the one I receive from your letters.

While you love to praise yourself, it pleases me to believe that you are more natural with me, by which I mean less insincere, than you are in society. There are in you so many contradictions that I am terribly puzzled to reach an exact conclusion; that is to say, to the sum total + so many good qualities, — so many bad ones = x. It is this x that I find confusing.

When I saw you at the home of our friend Madame V., just as you were leaving Paris, your extreme elegance and style astonished me greatly. The cakes that you devour so hungrily, after the fatigue of the opera, have astonished me still more. Not that I do not place love of admiration and epicureanism among the chief of your faults, but I supposed that these faults had a mental rather than a tangible form; I imagined that you cared very little for dress, and that eating was to you only a diversion; that you enjoyed making an impression by your beautiful eyes and your clever sayings, rather than by your gowns. See how mistaken I was!

But this time you shall not reproach me with pessimism, for while you have been falling from grace day by day, I fancy that I have improved. It is unreasonably late and I have abandoned a

highly learned company of Greeks and Romans to write to you.

I am just reminded that I must rise early to-morrow—that is, to-day—which prevents me from explaining in what way I am better than I used to be, while you have been amusing yourself teasing me about Madame . . . I will defer my own praises for another time; besides, I have come to the end of my paper.

XXIX

PARIS, *December 2, 1842.*

There is in some old Spanish romance a very pleasing tale. A barber had his shop at the corner of the street, and the shop had two doors. Through one of these doors he used to pass out into the street, stab a passer-by, then hurrying into the shop, he went out the other door and bandaged the wounds of his victim. *Gelehrten ist gut predigen.*

I bear no grudge against your blue cashmere or your cakes; all such things are perfectly natural. I even admire coquetry and greediness, but only when one confesses them frankly. But you, who very justly aspire to be something more than a mere woman of the world, why should you have its defects? Why

are you never frank with me? To give you an example of frankness, will you, or will you not, come with me to the Museum next Tuesday? If you are not willing, or if it will inconvenience or embarrass you to come, you shall receive your Etruscan seal in a little box Tuesday evening, and it will be delivered to you as naturally as possible.

Your propensity for coquetry is very amusing. You chide me for being indifferent, but if I were not so, or if I did not make a show of indifference, you would drive me mad. Why does one carry an umbrella? Because it rains.

Notwithstanding your wishes, Madame de M. will certainly come to Paris. She has to purchase the trousseau of her daughter, who is to be married in the spring. Unless an unforeseen revolution occurs, the said trousseau will be made in Paris, and the marriage, also, may take place here.

I am not acquainted with the future husband, but by means of intrigue I had a hand in dismissing a former one whom I disliked, although an exceptional man in many respects. In the first place, he was not tall enough; besides, he has no less than five or six grandeeships accumulated on one small body. This action is in itself a proof of my amelioration. Formerly, it

amused me to see others held up to ridicule, but now I should like to have almost everyone shielded from derision. I have also become more humane, and the last time I saw the bull-fights in Madrid I felt none of the pleasure with which I was inspired ten years ago by a similar exhibition. In fact, I have a dread of all kinds of suffering, and for some time I have believed in mental suffering. In a word, I endeavour as far as possible to forget the *ego*. This, in brief, is the list of my perfections.

It is not through *vanagloria* that I am ambitious to become an Academician. One of these days I shall present myself for admission, but I am sure to be black-balled. I hope I may have patience and persistence sufficient to accept the disappointment and to persevere in my endeavour. If the cholera breaks out again, I may perhaps succeed in attaining a seat. No, I have not the least bit of *vanagloria*. I take things too literally, perhaps, but I have been disillusioned of taking a poetical view of life. However, you may be sure that you will never know either all the good or all the ill in me. All my life I have been praised for virtues that I do not possess, and slandered for faults which are not mine. I imagine you at present as spending your evenings with your two brothers. Good-bye.

XXX

December, Monday morning.

Now this is what I call talking. To-morrow at two o'clock, at the place which you appoint. I hope to see you to-morrow relieved of your headache, in spite of which you are kinder than usual. Good-bye. I shall be delighted to see the *Joconde* with you. I am obliged to hasten to the four ends of Paris, and I have only time to thank you for your almost unhoped-for graciousness.

XXXI

Wednesday.

Is it not true that the devil is not so black as he is painted? I am rejoiced to learn that you did not catch cold, and that you slept well. It is more than I can say. Be so good as to consider that the Museum will be closed January 20 for the exhibition of paintings, and that it would be a pity not to say farewell to it. Of course, you will find a thousand-and-one *buts* to this suggestion. Take care that you do not regret, on January 21, that you did not recover the courage that you found yesterday.

XXXII

PARIS, *Sunday evening, December.*

Your letter did not surprise me in the least. I was expecting it. I know you well enough now to be sure that when you have had a kind thought you are sure to repent of it, and try to have it forgotten as promptly as possible. You understand very well, too, how to sugar-coat the most bitter pills. I owe you this in justice. As I am not as strong as you, I can say nothing to overcome your heroic resolution not to return to the Museum. I am confident that you will do exactly as you please; only, I hope that in a month from now you will be more charitably inclined towards me. Perhaps, after all, you are right. There is a Spanish proverb which says: *Entre santa y santo, pared de cal y canto.*

You compare me to the devil. I observed Tuesday evening that I did not pay attention enough to my dull old books, and too much to your gloves and boots. But, notwithstanding all you tell me with your diabolical spirit of coquetry, I do not believe that you fear any repetition at the Museum of our past folly. Frankly, this is what I think of you, and how I explain your refusal: you like to have some in-

distinct target for your coquetry, and that target is I. You do not wish to come too close to it, because, in the first place, if you should fail to strike it your vanity would suffer too much; and again, if you should see it too distinctly, you would discover that it was not worth aiming at. Have I guessed it correctly? I wished, the other day, to ask when I might see you again, and perhaps if I had insisted you would have named a day. Then I thought that after you had said Yes you would write me No, and that this would have distressed and angered me.

I continue to speak to you with the most absurd frankness, but my example makes no impression at all upon you.

XXXIII

Sunday, December 19, 1842.

It is evident that you have had professors in Greek and in German, but one may be permitted to doubt if you have had any in Logic. Really, was such reasoning ever heard of!—for instance, when you say you do not want to see me, because, whenever you see me, you fear you shall never see me again. By such reasoning, I consider your letter as null and void. The only thing which I can make out is that you have a hand-

kerchief to give me. Send it to me, or say that I may receive it from your own hand, which would suit me much better. I hate surprises that are announced beforehand, because I imagine them much more beautiful than they prove to be.

Agree with me, and let us see the Museum once more together. If I bore you, that will be the end of it, and I shall not take you there again; if not, what prevents our meeting from time to time? Unless you give me some intelligible reason, I shall persist in believing that which seems to vex you so much. I should have written to you immediately, but I had mislaid your letter, which I wished to read again. I turned my desk topsy-turvy, and set it in order, which is no trifling matter. Finally, after burning several reams of old papers, which had seemed destined to collect dust on my desk, I concluded that your letter had vanished by some sort of witchcraft. I found it awhile ago in my Xenophon, where it had hidden itself, I don't know how; and I have read it again with admiration. Assuredly you feel very little of that veneration of which you sometimes speak, else you would not say so many *sinrazones;* but I will forgive you, if you will let me see you soon, for you are much more agreeable when you talk to me than when you write.

I am distressingly ill, and cough hard enough to rend rocks apart, yet I am going Monday evening to hear Mademoiselle Rachel recite from *Phèdre* before five or six great men. She will believe that my cough is an intrigue against her. Write to me soon. I am horribly blue, and you would be doing an act of charity to say something kind, as you do occasionally.

XXXIV

December, 1842.

It is some time since I have felt like writing to you. My nights are passed writing prose for posterity to read. This is because I have been dissatisfied both with you and with myself, which is most extraordinary. I find myself to-day in a more indulgent frame of mind. This evening I heard Madame Persiani, which has reconciled me with human nature. If I were King Saul I should put her in the place of David.

I am told that M. de Pongerville, the Academician, is going to die. This grieves me, because I shall not take his place, and I should prefer that he wait until my time were come. This Pongerville made a metrical translation of a Latin poet named Lucretius, who died at the age of forty-three from the effect of a love-potion

which he took to make himself beloved or lovable. But previous to this he had composed a long poem on *The Nature of Things*, a poem atheistic, impious, abominable, and so forth.

M. de Pongerville's health troubles me more than it should, and, besides, I shall be obliged to start out at ten o'clock day after to-morrow for the vexatious fatigues of New Year's Day. Why is it a matter of course that everybody on this day should either go visiting or else feel it necessary to raise Cain? I have still other grievances, which would make you laugh, so I shall not tell them to you.

Do you know that if we continue to write to each other in this tone of friendly confidence, keeping to ourselves our secret thoughts, we have only one resource: that is, to be more careful of our style, then to publish some day our correspondence, as has been done for Voltaire and Balzac? You have a remarkable habit of considering as non-existent things of which you do not wish to speak, which certainly does great credit to your diplomacy. It seems to me that you grow more beautiful. This I thought impossible, for the boundless sea is not increased by the addition of a few drops of water. This proves that what you lose in one direction you gain in another. One improves in beauty when

one is in health; one is in health when one has a wicked heart and a good digestion. Do you still eat little cakes?

Good-bye. I wish you a happy ending of the old year, and a happy opening of the new year. Your friends will wear away your cheeks on that day. When I have finished the writing which I mentioned a while ago I shall go to London for a two weeks' holiday. This will be towards Easter.

XXXV

December, 1842.

You must know that I have been very ill since we met. I have had all the cats in the world in my throat, all the fires of hell in my chest, and I have spent several days in bed, meditating on the things of this world. I seemed to be on the slope of a mountain, whose summit I had barely crossed, with infinite fatigue and little pleasure. This declivity was very steep, and tiresome to descend, and it would have been convenient to come to an opening before reaching the base. The only source of consolation that I have been able to discover along this descent is a little sunshine afar off, a few months spent in Italy, in Spain, or in Greece, in oblivion

of the entire world, the present, and, above all, the future.

All this was not enlivening, but some one had brought me four volumes of Dr. Strauss' *Life of Jesus.* In Germany this is called an *exegesis;* it is a Greek word which they have discovered, and it signifies discussion or interpretation carried to an extremely fine point; but it is highly amusing. I have noticed that a subject proves entertaining in proportion as it is devoid of a profitable conclusion. Do you not agree with me, *Señora caprichosa?*

XXXVI

Tuesday night, December, 1842.

It is no longer a question of Jean-Paul; it is a question of French, and of the French of the period of Louis XV. Fine reasoning that, founded entirely on selfishness. There are certain people who buy a piece of furniture the colour of which pleases them; then, because they are afraid of spoiling it, they hide the article under a linen cover, which is never removed until the furniture is worn out.

In all that you say and do you substitute invariably a conventional for a genuine sentiment. This is, perhaps, etiquette. The ques-

tion is to know what it means to you, in comparison with something else with which, in my opinion, it would be silly and ridiculous to compare it.

You know that while I have very little sympathy for false reasoning, I respect convictions, even those that seem to me the most absurd. You have a great many ridiculous notions (pardon the word) of which I should hesitate to deprive you, since you are so fond of them and have no others to take their place. But we are dreaming. Is it not the realities of life that awaken us invariably from our dreams? Should we still try to close the crevice through which we see fairy-land?

What is it you fear? In your letter to-day, among a lot of harsh words and gloomy, pessimistic thoughts, you say something which is true: "I think I never loved you so much as I did yesterday." You might have added, "I love you less to-day." I am sure that if you felt to-day as you did yesterday, you would be full of remorse, as I predicted. Yet you seem scarcely touched by it. My remorse is of a very different quality.

I repent frequently of sticking too closely to my occupation of being a statue. You opened your heart to me yesterday; I should like to have

given you the same confidence, but you did not wish it. The linen cover still conceals the furniture! This is a subject upon which you compel me to scold you sharply. Yet, never did I feel less in the mood for scolding before receiving your letter. After all, I am like you: pleasant memories drive out the disagreeable ones.

By the way, how affectionate you are! You are reserving a surprise for my departure. You can guess how impatient I am. Last night, while returning from dinner, I discovered that I knew by heart the speech of *Tecmessa* which you had admired; and as I was in a thoughtful mood I translated it into verse—English verse, of course, for I detest French verse. I intended giving it to you, but I have changed my mind. Besides, I found a horrible fault of quantity in the word *Ajax*. It must be *Ajax*, must it not?

When shall I see you, to tell you what you never tell me? You see that we rule the weather. It clears for our benefit. Between two storms we have always one halcyon day. Tell me, please, that it may be two days, for I am tied down to work now.

XXXVII

PARIS, *January 3, 1843.*

Hurrah! this is what I call talking! You are so amiable when you wish to be. Why is it that you are so often unpleasant? No, indeed, written thanks are of no value; and after all my diplomacy in securing such cordial letters of introduction for your brother, I certainly deserve a few words of kindness from you. I will forgive you cheerfully for all your ridicule concerning balloons and the Academy, about which I think much less than you suppose. If I ever become an Academician, I shall be no harder than a rock. By that time I shall be perhaps somewhat shrivelled and mummified, but for all that I shall be a devilish good fellow.

The only way in which I can have Persiani for my David is to go to hear her every Thursday. As for Mademoiselle Rachel, I am not gifted with the faculty for enjoying poetry as often as music, and this—Rachel, not music—reminds me that I promised you a story. Shall I tell you now, or shall I reserve it until I see you? I am going to write it, for I shall have something else, no doubt, to tell you then.

Well, then, about two weeks ago I dined with

Rachel at the home of an Academician. It was to introduce Béranger to her. There were any number of great men present. She arrived late, and I did not like her entrance. The men said so many silly things to her, and the women did so many silly things, that I remained in my corner. Besides, I had not spoken to her for a year.

After dinner, Béranger, with the kindness and common sense habitual to him, told her that it was a great pity to fritter away her talents in the salon, and that there was but one audience worthy of her, that of the Theater Français, and so on. Mademoiselle Rachel seemed to approve cordially of the lecture, and, as a proof that she had profited thereby, she played the first act of *Esther*. An assistant was needed to read the other parts, and she had a copy of Racine brought to me most ceremoniously by an Academician who was performing the functions of a *cicisbeo*. I replied churlishly that I did not understand poetry, and that there were people in the room who, being in that business, could scan it much better than I. Hugo asked to be excused on account of his eyes, some one else for another reason. The host made a sacrifice of himself.

Imagine to yourself Rachel, dressed in black,

Racine

From an engraving by de Linck

Rachel at the [illegible] an Academician. It was to introduce [illegible] to her. There [illegible] any number of [illegible]. She arrived late, and I did not [illegible] her entrance. The men said so many [illegible] to her, and the women did so many [illegible], that I remained in my corner. [illegible] I had not spoken to her for a year.

[illegible], Béranger, with the kindness [illegible] sense habitual to him, told her that [illegible] pity to fritter away her talents in [illegible] that there was but one audience [illegible] of the Theater Français, and [illegible] Rachel seemed to approve [illegible] and, as a proof that she [illegible] she played the first act [illegible] was needed to read [illegible] and she had a copy of Racine [illegible] by an Aca-[illegible] the functions of a [illegible] I applied charlishly that I did not [illegible] and that there were people in the [illegible] being in that business, could scan it [illegible] than I. Hugo asked to be excused [illegible] of his eyes, some [illegible] for another [illegible]. The host made a sacrifice of himself.

Imagine [illegible] black,

Edelinck Sculp. C.P.R.
Jean Racine
de l'Accademie Francoise

standing between a piano and a tea-table, with a door at her back, assuming her theatrical expression. This visible transformation scene was highly amusing and very pretty; it lasted about two minutes, then she began:

"Is it thou, dear Elise?" . . . The confidante, in the midst of her reply, dropped her glasses and her book; ten minutes passed before she had recovered her place in the book, and her eyes. It is evident to the audience that Esther is losing her temper. She continues. The door behind her opens; a servant enters. Some one makes a sign for him to retire. He hastens out, and can not succeed in closing the door. The said door, unlatched, swings back and forth, accompanying Rachel with a melodious creaking which is extremely diverting. As this noise did not cease, Mademoiselle Rachel laid her hand upon her heart as if she were ill, but in the manner of one accustomed to expiring in public. This created an opportunity for several persons to come to her assistance.

During the intermission Hugo and M. Thiers began to dispute on the subject of Racine, Hugo contending that Racine had a small mind and Corneille a great one. "You say this," replied Thiers, "because you yourself have a great mind. You are the Corneille of

an age in which Casimir Delavigne is the Racine." At this Hugo shook his head with assumed humility. I leave you to judge if modesty was in evidence.

By this time, however, she had recovered from her swoon, and the act was concluded, but *fiascheggiando*. Some one who is well acquainted with Mademoiselle Rachel remarked, as we left the house, " How she must have sworn to-night, after going home! " The words gave me food for thought. This is my story. All I ask of you is, not to compromise me by repeating it to any Academician.

I did not recognise you Sunday until I was quite near. My first impulse was to join you, but seeing you with so many others, I went on my way. I did well, I think. It seems to me that heretofore I have always seen you with pale cheeks, from which I concluded Sunday that they appeared rosy in comparison with the solemnity of the day.

Good-night, or rather good-morning. Monday, or rather Tuesday, for it is three o'clock in the morning.

XXXVIII

Thursday, January, 1843.

Let us take advantage of the fine weather to-day.

Onc homme n'eut les dieux tant à la main,
*Qu'asseuré fut de vivre au lendemain.**

At the appointed place, then, "at two o'clock to-morrow, Thursday." I say to-day, for it is now one o'clock. The stars are shining brightly, and as I returned a while ago from the ministerial assembly, I found the walking as tolerable as it was the last time we were out. Wear your seven-league boots, however—it is safer. If by chance you should be out when this letter arrives, I shall wait for you until half past two; if you do not come at all to-day, then Saturday. To any one else but you I should say something else.

I wished to write you a letter to-day, but remembering my promise, I have decided not to do so. I did wrong. You should have appointed the day and the hour, which would have saved us the inconvenience of missing each other.

* No man knows the gods so well,
That he may be sure of living until to-morrow.

I hope, however, that this will not happen. I suppose you are really anxious to take this walk, for your letter is colder than usual. There is a charming equipoise in your actions. You are unwilling that I should ever be perfectly happy, so you make your plans in advance to put me in a rage. This will be, perhaps, more difficult than you think, for although I have been ill for two days, the world to-day looks rose-colour.

I dined yesterday at a house where, as I entered the room late, among a lot of women I thought I saw you. Consequently I was struck dumb for a quarter of an hour. I did not glance in the direction of the person I supposed to be you, unable to decide, as is always the case when one is embarrassed, whether to speak to you or not.

Making a desperate effort finally, I walked up to the lady, who turned out to be a Spanish woman whom I had met several times. It only rests with her to believe *che ha fatto colpo.* I am sending you Dickens' *Sketches,* which amused me when I read them. You may have read them already, but no matter! At two o'clock, then, to-day, Thursday.

XXXIX

PARIS, *Sunday, January 16, 1843.*

I thank you for having thought to reassure me, but I am anxious about those flushed cheeks of which you speak so lightly. I regret sincerely, I assure you, that my persuasions brought you out in that frightful downpour. It happens seldom that I sacrifice others to myself, and when this does occur I am overcome with remorse. Anyhow, you are not ill, and you are not angry, which is the most important consideration.

It is a blessing that a small misfortune arises now and then to turn aside greater ones. We must give the devil his due. It seems to me we were both depressed, although happy enough at heart. Some joys are so deep that they do not show on the surface. I hope you felt a little of what I experienced. Until you tell me the contrary, I shall believe that you did. You say twice in your letter, "Good-bye, until we meet again!" You are sincere, are you not? But where and when shall it be? My last suggestion proved to be so unfortunate, that I am altogether discouraged. Henceforth I shall trust your inspirations only.

I have a wretched cold this evening, but the rain is not responsible for it, I fancy. I spent the entire morning in a room without fire, examining Chaldean and Persian talismans and rings, while the antiquarian was dying for fear I should steal them. Just to tease him, I remained in the cold room longer than my wishes inclined me.

Good-night, and may we soon meet. It is now your turn to command. Were it only to have you assure me that the rain has not given you a cold, or made you despondent or vexed, I should like to see you.

XL

Sunday night, January, 1843.

As for me, I was not very tired, and yet when I followed on the map the course of our peregrinations, I see that we should both have been worn out. The reason is, that happiness gives me strength, while from you it takes it away. *Wer besser liebt?* I dined out, and later went to a ball. I could not go to sleep for a long time, thinking of our walk.

You are right in saying that it was a dream. But is it not a great blessing to be able to dream when one wishes? Since you are the dictator,

it is for you to say when you care to dream again. You say we were not considerate of each other. I do not understand. Is it because I made you walk too far? But how could we do otherwise? So far as I am concerned, I am perfectly satisfied with the way you treated me, and I should compliment you even more, if I did not fear that compliments might make you less kind in the future.

As for our follies, think no more about them; that is our prerogative. When you are inclined to find fault with anything, ask yourself if you would really and truly prefer the contrary. I should like you to answer this question frankly. But frankness is not one of your most conspicuous virtues.

You once ridiculed me, and took in an uncomplimentary sense what I said one day about sleepiness, or, rather, the lethargy that sometimes overcomes one too happy to find words in which to express his emotion. I noticed yesterday that you were under the influence of that drowsiness, which is well worth waiting for. I might in my turn have reproached you for your own reproaches; but I was too happy to disturb my happiness.

Good-bye, dear friend, but not for long, I hope.

XLI

Wednesday night, January, 1843.

I have been waiting all day for a letter from you. I thought the pavements dry enough, and the sky bright. But it appears that now you must have sunshine like that of last Thursday. Besides, I am sure you needed a long time to compose the letter which I received a while ago. It is made up of blame and threats, all very gracefully expressed, as you understand how to do. In the first place, I must thank you for your frankness, to which I will reply with a frankness equal to your own.

To begin with the reproaches, I think you make a great deal out of nothing. You have brooded over the affair until it has assumed an importance that does not belong to it, so that you have succeeded in making what even you yourself call *frivolities* a star-chamber matter.

There is but one point which is worth the trouble of an explanation. You speak to me of *precedents*, as if you believe that I am scheming with all the patience and Machiavellianism of an old cabinet minister to establish them. Refer a little to your memory, and you will see that nothing is farther from the truth. If it were

necessary to discuss the question of precedents, I might mention that of the salon in the rue Saint Honoré the first time I saw you again; then our first visit to the Louvre, which came near costing me an eye. It all seemed a simple enough matter at the time, but now it is another thing. You must have discovered that sometimes I act upon impulse, but that I give it up as soon as I realise that you are displeased; more frequently, however, my impulses are limited to thoughts rather than to acts. Enough said concerning reproaches and precedents.

As to your threats, be assured that I am keenly alive to them; and, although fearing them greatly, nevertheless I can not forbear telling you once more all that I think. Nothing would be easier than to make you promises, but I feel that it would be impossible for me to keep them. Be satisfied, then, to go on as we have in the past, or else let us stop seeing each other.

I must tell you that even the obstinacy with which you set yourself in opposition to these *frivolities*, as you call them, renders them all the dearer to me, and makes me attach to them a new importance. This seems to be the only proof that you are able to give me of your feelings towards me. If I must resist the most innocent temptations in order to see you, it is a

saint's labour which surpasses my strength. It would be, unquestionably, a great pleasure to see you, but the condition of transforming myself into a statue, like that king in the *Thousand and One Nights*, is insupportable to me.

We have now come to a clear understanding with each other. You shall decide, according to your wisdom, whether we are to postpone our next walk several thousand years, or to the first bright day. You see I do not accept your advice to practise hypocrisy. You knew beforehand that this would be impossible. The only hypocrisy of which I am capable is to conceal from the people I love all the pain they cause me. I can sustain this effort for some time, but not forever. When you receive this letter, it will have been a week since we met.

If you persist in your threats, write to me promptly. This will be on your part a favour which I shall appreciate.

XLII

January, 1843.

I am no longer surprised that you learned German so well and so quickly; you possess the genius of that language, for you write in French sentiments worthy of Jean-Paul; as, for exam-

ple, when you say, "My malady is a sensation of happiness which is almost pain." In prose this means, I hope, "I am quite well again, and was not very ill."

You are right to scold me for lack of consideration for those who are ill. I have reproached myself bitterly for having made you take that walk, for having allowed you to sit so long in the shade. As for the rest, I have no regrets, nor have you either, I hope. Contrary to my usual habit, I have no distinct recollections of that day, but am like a cat who licks his whiskers for a long time after drinking his milk. Admit that the peace of which you sometimes speak with admiration, that the *kêf*, which is superior even to the best that we know, is as nothing in comparison to the happiness "which is almost pain." Nothing is more insignificant than the life of an oyster, especially of an oyster which is never eaten.

You profess to spoil me, while the fact is that you yourself have been so spoiled that you ill understand how to spoil others. You are pre-eminent in your ability to provoke them; but in point of compliments I think you owe me several in compensation for the magnanimity with which I have allowed you to scold me. I marvel at myself. Thus, instead of your usual sermon,

in your next letter tell me something pleasant, or rather say all those charming extravagances that come to you so easily.

You have compelled me to take up once more my Asiatic journey better than I could have done it for myself. A faster train than the railway affords is waiting for us, and we have it in our minds. I took your "hint," and since receiving your letter I have accompanied you to Tyre and to Ephesus; together we have crept into the beautiful grotto of Ephesus. We sat beside the ancient tombs, and conversed of many things. We quarrelled, and made up again; it was all as it was in the country the other day, only there was nothing to disturb us except several big, inoffensive, but repulsive-looking lizards. I can not, even in the mind's eye, picture you as sympathetic as I should like to have you; at Ephesus even, I fancied you as a little sulky, and abusing my patience.

The other day you spoke of a surprise that you would have for me, but how do you expect me to believe you? All that you can do is to yield when you have reached the limit of your futile excuses. But how is it possible for you voluntarily to contrive a gift, when you have a genius for refusing all I ask? I am perfectly sure, for instance, that it would never occur to

you to propose a day for us to go for a walk. Do you prefer Monday, or Tuesday? I am anxious about the weather; nevertheless, I trust to our good demon, as the Greeks say.

By the way, I want to read you a passage from a Greek tragedy, which I shall translate literally, and of which you shall then give me your opinion. I believe the Spanish comedy has dropped behind, somewhere between the place we landed and that where we re-embarked. But as I believe you were reading the history of the count de Villa-Mediana, I will try and find the little poem of the duke de Rivas for you.

Good-bye. Do not have any second thoughts, and give me a place in your first. You know in which place I belong. Remind me to tell you a story of a somnambulist, which I intended telling you the other day.

XLIII

PARIS, *January 21, 1843.*

You are very kind, and I thank you for your first letter, which has given me more pleasure than the second, for the latter has a flavour of second impulses. It is not bad, however. But you must write more legible German. I am sadly in need of the commentaries which you

offer me—verbal ones, of course, for they are the best kind. At first I read *heilige Empfindung*, then afterwards I thought it should read *selige*. But there are two meanings. Does it mean a sensation of happiness, or sentiment that is dead, past? If I had seen you writing, I should have guessed, probably, from your expression what you intended to say. That was double coquetry on your part, coquetry in writing, coquetry of ambiguity.

Alas! you overrate my knowledge in matters of dress. I have, however, very positive ideas on that subject. I will submit them to you, if you like; but I do not understand most of the beautiful things that should be admired, unless they are explained to me. If you will point them out to me, I shall understand immediately, I assure you. But when, and where? These two questions engage my attention quite as much as your why and wherefore.

Do you not look back longingly to the beautiful warm days of the spring? No danger then of wetting those wonderful little boots! If you will tell me that you have remembered them, and that you still think of them, you will give me renewed patience; but you must do something more than think; you must resolve. I have no desire to recall your promises, for I hope you

will add to your good faith by fulfilling them graciously, and not keep them waiting too long. I was so utterly overcome with dismay by that storm, and by its consequences, that I have become entirely sugared over with suavity and self-sacrifice. I have now sufficient confidence in you to believe that you will not take advantage of it to become tyrannical. You have, I regret to say, strong leanings in that direction. That was formerly a fault of mine—tyranny, I mean—but I flatter myself I have overcome it. Good-bye, then, dearest! Think of me sometimes.

XLIV

January 27, 1843.

Hear what happened to me. I was feeling very ill this morning, but was obliged to go out on business. Returning about five o'clock in a hideous mood, I fell asleep before the fire as I was smoking my cigar and reading Dr. Strauss. Now it seemed to me that I was still seated in my arm-chair, fully awake, and reading, when you entered the room, and said to me, "Is not this the simplest way to see each other?" "Not the best way," I replied, for it seemed to me there were two or three other persons in the

room. However, we conversed as if that made no difference; whereupon I awoke, and found that some one had brought a letter from you. See how lucky it was I fell asleep!

I am not conscious of having written you anything out of the way, consequently I have no apology to offer. It would be your place rather to apologise, but you do so with so little penitence, and with so much irony, that it is very evident you have lost that veneration with which you formerly honoured me. I can not, however, harbour resentment against you in spite of my resolutions, so I resign myself to remain your victim, only do not take advantage of my generosity; that would be neither handsome nor generous.

You speak of the sunshine, and remind me of it almost as if it were the Greek calends. Probably we shall have more sunshine next June, but must we wait until then? It is true that you are *escarmentada* of cloudy weather, but while using due precautions, might we not take advantage of the first fair weather? I would not have you catch cold on my account. Be sure to wear your overshoes. No matter in what old costume, to see you is always pleasure enough for me.

What is this pain in the side of which you

speak so lightly? Do you know that pneumonia begins that way? You went to the ball, and probably caught cold going out into the air. Relieve my mind at once, I beg of you. I would rather think of you cross, than ill. If you are entirely well and in good spirits, and if the weather is never so little fine Saturday, why should we not take that walk? We could go somewhere, far away from everybody, and then walk and talk.

If you can not, or will not, come Saturday, I shall not be angry, but anyway, try to come soon. When I ask you for anything, you grant it only after having kept me fuming for so long that you prevent me from feeling as grateful as I should, perhaps; and you deprive yourself, moreover, of all the merit which would have been yours had you been promptly generous.

To converse together, and—what has sometimes happened—to think together, is this, then, a pleasure of which you grow weary so soon? 'Tis true that one can speak only for himself, but each one of our excursions has been to me more delightful than the preceding one, because of the memories which it has left with me. I make an exception of the last one, and that one I should like to forget altogether, and replace it by another in which you would run

no risk of catching cold. Thus peace is made, and I await your orders to ratify it Thursday evening.

XLV

PARIS, *February 3, 1843.*

Does not this lovely weather make you think of Versailles, and consequently does it not make you wish to laugh? If you were the least logical you would not laugh. I am sure you are aware that Versailles is the capital of the Department of Seine-et-Oise, where there are officers for the protection of the weak, and that French is spoken there. In such a place you would be as safe as in Paris. Moreover, what you wish to do is to walk without meeting any of your gossiping acquaintances. At Versailles, on a day when the Museum is closed, you are sure of meeting no one. I do not remind you of the air, or of the beauty of the grounds, which have their own value, and which influence always the nature of one's thoughts.

I am confident, for instance, that at Versailles you would have had no sign of that attack of temper of the other day. That you have now recovered from it I am sure, for the closing words of your letter bore the inspiration of your

good genius. The beginning was suggested by your evil genius. I write in great haste, for I am overwhelmed in business matters, which are proving very tiresome. Think of me sometimes, and do not be angry. Don't laugh too much when you think of me.

XLVI

PARIS, *February 7, 1843.*

Allow me, if you please, to make a very simple calculation, and all will be said on the subject of Versailles. Is an hour's stroll in that lovely garden such a difficult thing to imagine? Now, did we not spend two hours together at the Museum that dreadfully foggy day? I have finished.

You make me laugh at your idea of the commissions to which I am ordered to attend. Although those are not lacking, the commissions to which I referred are assemblies where several persons together are unable to accomplish the task that one alone could do much better.

Do not fancy that you are the only one who does errands. I have run all over Paris buying gowns and hats, and I have an engagement next Wednesday to select a rococo shepherdess costume. All this is for Madame de M.'s two

daughters. Give me your advice. What sort of costumes should they have for a masquerade ball? A Scotch and a Cracovian costume are now on the way. I have one shepherdess dress, but I need still another disguise. Here is their description: the elder is a pale brunette, not quite so tall as you, very pretty and vivacious; the younger is quite tall, and fair, an unusually handsome girl, with the sort of hair that Titian adored. I should like to have her go as a shepherdess, with powdered hair. What would you advise for the other?

I ask myself why you seem to me to be more beautiful than ever, and am unable to find a satisfactory answer. Is it because your expression is less startled than it was? Yet, the last time I saw you you reminded me of a bird that had just been caged. You have seen me under three aspects. I know of but two of yours—when you are terrified, and again with a sort of radiant defiance which I have seen on no face but yours.

You accuse me unfairly of being fond of society. I have been out but one evening in a fortnight, and that was to call on my minister. I found all the women in mourning, several of them wearing mantillas—no, not mantillas, but black beards which made them resemble Spanish

women. I thought it was very pretty. I am strangely depressed and morose. I should like to pick a quarrel with you, but do not know what to quarrel about. You ought to write me a kind and sympathetic letter. I should try to imagine how you looked as you wrote it, and that would comfort me.

Does my novel interest you? Then read the end of the second volume, Mr. Yellowplush. It is a fairly good caricature, in my opinion. Good-bye. Write to me soon.

I reopen my letter to beg you to observe that the weather has the appearance of clearing.

XLVII

PARIS, *Sunday, February 11, 1843.*

I am not quite sure whether I should believe implicitly all that your letter tells me of your indisposition, and of the affairs that detain you. Among all the pleasant things that you say, I think it is clear that you are not particularly anxious to see me. Am I mistaken, or is it that I am so unaccustomed to your soft words that I can not believe them true? Tuesday, shall you be well, shall you be unengaged, shall you be as sweet-tempered as you were last Wednesday? The weather yesterday afternoon was superb;

perhaps we shall be as fortunate next Tuesday, if my barometer does not deceive me.

I have something for you, which you will probably think very silly. Since seeing you I have run around considerably, and have played a number of Academic tricks. I am not in good practice, which is to my disadvantage, but I believe I can soon pick it up again. To-day I have visited five illustrious writers of poems or prose, and if night had not overtaken me I am not sure that I could not have finished up my thirty-six visits at a single stretch. It is ludicrous when rivals happen to meet. Some of them look at me as if they would like to eat me alive. I am, indeed, thoroughly worn out with all these duty-calls, and it would be delightful to forget them all during an hour spent with you.

XLVIII

February 11, 1843.

Does not this snow-storm take it upon itself to say No, without your interference in the matter? This should cure you of your bad habit of refusing. The devil is wicked enough, without your efforts to rival him. I was very ill last night, suffering from fever and sharp, shooting pains. I am somewhat better to-night. It seems

to me that in your last note you are trying to find an excuse to quarrel about our walk. What was wrong about it, unless you caught cold? I made you walk so fast that I have little anxiety on that score.

There was in your appearance an air of health and vigour that was delightful to see. Besides that, you are losing gradually your habitual restraint with me. These walks are an advantage to you in every way, not to mention the variety of archæological knowledge that you acquire without taking any trouble at all. Already you are past-mistress on the subject of vases and statues.

Every time we meet there is a crust of ice between us to be broken, and it is at least a quarter of an hour before we can take up our last conversation at the point where we left it. If we saw each other oftener, however, doubtless there would be no ice at all. Which do you prefer, the end, or the beginning of our meetings?

You have not thanked me for not mentioning Versailles to you. I think of it often, I assure you. I have something to show you, which I forgot; it belongs to *auld lang syne*. Come, guess, if you can. When I see you I forget all I intended to say. I made a note of a lecture I wanted to deliver about your jealousy

of your brother. In your rôle of sister, as I conceive it, you ought to wish for your brother to love some good and worthy woman. Bear in mind that you can not prevent it in any case, and if you will not be a happy, or at least a resigned confidante, you will certainly become estranged from him.

Good-bye. My finger is deucedly painful, but I am told this is a good symptom. By way of diversion, I will think of your hands and feet. You think of them seldom, I am sure.

XLIX

February 17, 1843.

It is possible that I was unjust towards you; if so, I ask your pardon. At the same time, you do not try to put yourself in my place, and because you do not look at things from my standpoint you insist that I take your point of view, which is impossible. You do not, perhaps, give me all the credit I deserve for my efforts to be like you. I do not understand your present attitude towards me. Not only so, but speaking literally, I have seen for a long time that you love me better at a distance than when I am with you.

Let us talk no more of this now. I wish

only to say that I do not censure you, and that I am not offended with you, and that if at times I am depressed, you must not suppose that I am angry. You have made me a promise, which you may be sure I shall not forget, and yet I do not know if I shall remind you of it. There is nothing I dislike so much as quarrels, but I should have to quarrel with you in order to jostle your memory. Nothing that pains you would give me pleasure; therefore I will agree to the programme which you have arranged.

Indeed, that was a happy inspiration of ours the other day. What a snow, and what a rain! What a pity it would have been to put me off until to-day! You are always afraid to follow your first impulses; do you not know that they are the only ones which are worth anything, and which always succeed? I have an idea that the devil is constitutionally slow, and decides always on the longest way around. To-night I have been to the Italian Opera, where, in spite of the constant applause given my enemy, Madame Viardot, I enjoyed myself.

I have received from Spain the books for which I have been waiting in order to continue my work, so that temporarily I am in high spirits. I wish I knew that you were thinking of me, and especially that we were thinking to-

gether. Good-bye. I am charmed that you like the pins. I was afraid you might disdain them; but, despite the pleasure it would give me to see you wear them, do not wear the blue shawl next time. You are right in saying that it is too showy.

L

PARIS, *Monday night, February, 1843.*

If I were not afraid of spoiling you, I should tell you of the pleasure I have had from your letter, with its very gracious promise, and, more than all, your eagerness for the return of dry weather. Is it not great folly on your part to wish to make fixed dates for our walks, as if we could ever be sure of a day? Was I not right in saying, "Come as often as you can"? When we have had two days of fine weather, we may take it for granted that it will rain for two months afterwards. What matters it if at the end of a year we find ourselves so much ahead by a few days' promenade? Indeed, your letter is full of first impulses, that is why I like it so well. I fear, however, that you are so generously disposed only because we can not take advantage of your good intentions. Nevertheless, your promises are somewhat reassuring,

and if you do not keep them you will be very, very sorry.

You made me think of all sorts of things the other evening at the opera, with your iris-coloured gown. But you need not be coquettish with me. I love you no better in iris-colour than in black.

Tell me the truth, were you not angry with me when you reflected? If so, that would have been for me an unfortunate first impulse the other day, and that would have caused me both pleasure and distress. When I see you I shall know which.

I know the superstition attaching to knives and sharp instruments, but not that about pins. I should have thought, on the contrary, that pins signified attachment, and that is the reason, perhaps, which made me select them. Do you remember that you would not allow me to pick up yours at Madame de P.'s? I still cherish this grievance against you, along with many others. I forgive them all to-day, but when you have added others to them I shall be as indignant as ever.

It is a great misfortune to be unable to forget. My writing to-day resembles a cat's scratching. I can not yet sharpen my pen, and doubt very much whether you can read my

scrawl. It is almost as intelligible as what you write in blank.

I suppose you are going in society a great deal this carnival season. In arranging my desk I have discovered that I failed to go to the ball given by the Director of the Opera. What has become of the happy time when such things pleased me? Now they bore me to death. Do I not seem very old to you?

There is some appearance of clearing weather, but I dare not say a word. I have sworn to leave you perfect liberty. Theodore Hook is dead. Have you read *Ernest Maltravers*, and *Alice*, by Bulwer? They present charming pictures of youthful and of mature love. I have them both, when you wish them.

LI

Thursday night, February, 1843.

In vain have I tried to find in your last letter some excuse to be angry with you, for even anger would be a relief. I have burned your letter, but I remember it only too distinctly. It was very sensible, too sensible, perhaps, but very kind also. For a week I have had such a strong desire to see you, that I have even brought myself to the point of regretting our quarrels. I am

writing to you now, and do you know why? Because you will not reply, and that will make me furious, and anything is preferable to the despondency in which you have left me. Nothing is more absurd; we were perfectly right to say farewell.

You and I understand so thoroughly the meaning of reason, that we should act in the most reasonable way possible. But after all, happiness is found only in folly and in dreams. It is strange, but I never believed, until this last time, that our quarrels could be serious. But it is now ten days since we parted in such a solemn manner that I am terrified. Were we more angry than usual, more clear-sighted? and did we love each other less? There was between us that day something, certainly, which I do not remember distinctly, but which had never existed before.

It never rains but it pours. At the same time that we parted, my cousin changed his day at the Opera, so I shall not meet you there in future on Thursdays. I recall, also, that you predicted, prophetically, that I should forget you for the Academy, and it was before the Academy that we said good-bye. All this is very silly, but it haunts me, and I am dying to see you, were it only that we might quarrel.

Shall I send you this letter? I have not quite decided. I went yesterday, on the strength of a Greek verse, to *Saint Germain l'Auxerrois*. Do you remember when we used to understand each other?

Good-bye. Write to me. I feel a little comforted from having written to you.

LII

PARIS, *February, 1843.*

It has happened often during my life to do reluctantly things which I have been afterwards very glad to have done. I hope that you may have the same experience. Suppose the contrary had occurred, would you not have felt some impatience for having come alone? Would you not have suffered some distress (let me believe you would) for having caused me sorrow?

Do you now recall with pride that strange influence which you have twice exerted on my thoughts and on my resolutions? The only mistake made has been to feel a little uncertainty. Are you not astonished, as I am, with that strange coincidence (I shall not say sympathy, for fear of offending you) of our thoughts? Do you recollect that on a former occasion we had an experience almost as miraculous? and

more recently still, beside a stove in the Spanish Museum, you read my thoughts as quickly as they came into my mind? For a long time I have suspected something of the diabolical in you, but I am reassured somewhat, remembering that I have seen both your feet, and neither one is a *cloven foot.* It may be, however, that you have concealed beneath those little boots a tiny hoof. I beg you to relieve my suspense.

Good-bye. Here is the book of which I spoke.

LIII

PARIS, *February 9, 1843.*

I was very uneasy when no word came from you. Not that I feared you had changed your mind, but I thought you were ill, and chided myself for taking you that long walk, returning through the wind and rain. Fortunately, it was the post-office, taking its Sunday holiday, which kept me waiting for your letter. Although the delay caused me intense suffering, I did not for a single moment blame you. I am glad to tell you this, so that you may know that I am overcoming my faults, as you also are overcoming yours. Good-bye, then, for a little while. My eyes no longer pain me. Yours, I fancy, sparkle

as brightly as ever. What mountains we make out of molehills! Would it not have been a mistake not to see each other again?

I am very blue and miserable. One of my intimate friends, whom I intended to visit in London, has just suffered a stroke of paralysis. I do not know whether it will be fatal, or, what would be even worse than death, whether he will linger on in that frightful condition of unconsciousness to which this disease brings the most brilliant minds. I am uncertain whether I ought not to go to see him at once.

Write to me, I pray you, and say something sympathetic, so that I will forget my gloomy forebodings.

LIV

Thursday morning, February, 1843.

Alas! Yes, poor Sharpe* has just been stricken down most suddenly and painfully. I have had no news from him since the 5th, and if you know some one in London who can tell you anything authentic, I beg you to write and learn his condition, and whether there is the least hope for his recovery. You may, perhaps, be

* Mr. Sutton Sharpe, a highly distinguished English advocate.

acquainted with his sister. It was at her house, I suppose, that you met him.

No matter what you say, second thoughts are only too evident in your letter. A few amiable words, however, slipped from you unconsciously. You go to a great deal of trouble to be disagreeable, and it is only by strenuous efforts that you succeed in being so.

Have you ever reflected that it is an admirable plan to place in a beautiful palace pictures and statuary, and to allow people to go there to enjoy them? Unfortunately, this superb place is to be closed, in order to hang there some hideous modern daubs. Does not this grieve you? Agree with me, and let us go and say good-bye to all those venerable statues. Saturday is an excellent day, for only Englishmen come then, and they do not get in the way of those who like to examine the pictures closely. What do you think of Saturday—that is to say, day after to-morrow? That will be the last Saturday. This word "last" grieves me. So, then, Saturday.

You speak of your remorse on account of my eye. What is the character of your remorse? The accident might have been avoided in two ways: I need not have exposed the eye to danger, and you might have taken care of it

for me. It is this last fact that causes you remorse—that ought to do so, at any rate, before your second impulses come to you. If I do not hear to the contrary, I shall await you Saturday, at two o'clock, in front of the *Joconde*, unless the weather is bad. But it will be fine weather, I hope, and if any disappointment comes it will be most assuredly your fault.

Why do you use such small paper, and why do you write only three lines, two of which are to quarrel with me? What matters it if one's life is short, provided it has been full of happiness! Is it not better to have rich memories, rather than many years of emptiness which have nothing to recall?

LV

PARIS, *February, 1843.*

Our letters crossed each other, and my suspense has been relieved sooner than I had hoped. I am very grateful. Notwithstanding the ambiguity of its style, I am deeply gratified by what your letter tells me. That verb of which you have such dread has to me a sweet sound, even when it is accompanied by all those adverbs which you understand so well how to weave around it.

Ridicule, if you like, my melancholy mood, aroused by the ruins of Carthage. Marius, sitting beside them as we were, dreamed, it may be, that he would enter Rome once more, while in my future I see little to hope for. You frighten me, dear friend, when you say that you dare no longer trust yourself to write to me, and that you have more courage to speak to me. You say the reverse of this when we are together. Will not the result be that you will neither speak to me nor write to me? You were vexed with me, you say. Was this just, and had I deserved it? Had I not your promise, and, in some measure, your example also? Have you remained blind to this? Have you retained an unpleasant memory? Are you still angry? All this is what I am anxious to know, and what, I am sure, you do not intend to tell me.

I am beginning to know you by heart, and this, I believe, is the cause of my frequent low spirits. There is in you such a strange combination of contrasts and contradictions that it is enough to provoke a saint. . . .

I heard sad news yesterday. Poor Sharpe died last Wednesday. The news of his death came at the moment not only when I believed him out of danger, but about to resume his ordinary occupations. I can not accustom my-

self to the thought of seeing him no more. It seems to me that if I were to go to London I should certainly find him there. . . .

LVI

Thursday night, March 1, 1843.

I was very much afraid I should not be able to see you Saturday, when I had been promising myself to give you a good scolding for your indifference the other day. But I have succeeded in overcoming all the obstacles. So, then, Saturday. It is a long time since we have had a falling out. Do you not think this very pleasant, and greatly preferable to the quarrels we used to have, the only benefit of which was our reconciliations? You still have one fault, however, that of making yourself so scarce. We see each other hardly once in a fortnight. Each time there seems to be a new crust of ice to be broken. Why do I not find you again just as you were when I left you? If we met oftener this would not happen. To you I am like an old opera which you must needs forget in order to hear it again with any pleasure. I, on the contrary, would love you better, I think, were I to see you every day. Prove to me that I am

wrong, and appoint a day in the near future when I may see you.

My fate at the Academy will be decided March 14. Reason tells me to hope, but some vague feeling of presentiment tells me just the opposite. In the meanwhile, I am making calls most conscientiously. People are extremely polite, perfectly accustomed to the parts they are playing, and taking them seriously. I am doing my very best to take mine equally seriously, but that is difficult for me to accomplish. Do you not think it comical that some one should say to a man, "Monsieur, I consider myself one among the forty of the most intellectual men in France —I am quite your equal," and other remarks equally as facetious? Of course, this must be said in a variety of ways, according to the person to whom I speak. This is my occupation at present, and if it lasts much longer I shall be perfectly exhausted. The 14th corresponds to the Ides of March, the day when my hero, the late Caesar, died. This is ominous, is it not?

LVII

PARIS, *March 11, 1843.*

It is a perfect shame, almost a crime, indeed, not to take advantage of this beautiful weather.

What say you to a long walk to-morrow, Thursday? You should be the one to make the suggestion, but you take care not to do it. We must positively go out to salute the coming of the first leaves. You can almost see them grow.

I am thinking, also, that you have told me the sunshine has a happy influence on your mood. I should like to make the test. I love you in all sorts of weather, but I think I am happiest when I see you in the sunshine. Goodbye.

LVIII

PARIS, *Friday morning, March 13, 1843.*

Here is your scarf. It was found last Saturday, in the anteroom of his Royal Highness, monseigneur le duc de Nemours. No one asked for an explanation of its presence in my pocket. I should have returned it sooner, if I had not hoped that the wish to recover your property would lead you to send me some news of yourself. I perceive that, while you were very eager concerning the first point, it has not succeeded in triumphing over your indifference as to the second. Why are you so afraid of the cold? I recollect that we had one experience in the snow which did not result disastrously.

Now there will be a thaw which will keep the streets impassable for I don't know how long. Answer me quickly. I am grieved to see that you love to torment me.

. . . . . .

LIX

PARIS, *Saturday night, March, 1843.*

Your letter does not show the least sign of repentance. I regret the loss of the amber pipe which you selected. There is something particularly agreeable in carrying often in my mouth a gift from you. But let it be as you wish. I say this very frequently, and yet there is never any reward for my resignation.

I am completely hardened by my present occupation. The Cathedral presses like a dead weight upon my shoulders, to say nothing of the responsibility which I accepted in a moment of zeal, and which I now repent from the depths of my soul. I envy women their lot, for they have nothing to do but to make themselves beautiful, and to prepare for the effect which they seek to produce on others. The word *others* has an ugly sound, but I imagine that it engages your attention more than it does mine. I am very much vexed with you, without knowing

exactly the reason, still there must be some good reason, for I could not be in the wrong. It seems to me you become more egotistical every day. When you speak of *us*, you mean only *yourself*. The more I think of this the more deplorable it appears.

If you have not written to London for that book, do not write; it is absurd to give a woman such a commission. While I value very greatly a rare book, I should not wish you to cause the least shadow of embarrassment by asking for it. The editor of the book is, I am told, a worthy Quaker, who has found some recent proofs that the Spanish Catholics of the fifteenth century were devoid of all morality, notwithstanding the Inquisition, and, it may be, because of it. The original copy, and the only one in existence, cost fifteen hundred pounds sterling. It has a hundred pages and more. I was wrong to mention it to you, and still more wrong to realise so tardily the absurdity of the thing. Good-bye. . . .

I was about to send you this letter when I received yours. I have been so engrossed in my reports and investigations that it has been impossible to write sooner. I proposed a walk for Tuesday, on condition that we should have an hour more together. Tell me if you are unen-

gaged Tuesday. Your absent-mindedness is very attractive, but have I anything to do with it? That is the question. What have you to ask my pardon for? Your sentiments are not at all like mine.

We are so unlike that it is hardly possible to understand each other. All this does not prevent me from anticipating the pleasure of seeing you. I thank you for your last letter; it is very sweet. You did not say where you were going in the country, or when you expected to start. I shall go to Rouen in a few days. Again, good-bye. I hope to see you Tuesday, and that you will be in good spirits, and less downcast than I am to-day.

LX

Monday night, March 21, 1843.

I am terribly blue, and full of remorse for my anger to-day. The only excuse I can offer is that the transition between our delicious stop in that wonderful resting-place and the remainder of our walk was too abrupt. It was like falling from heaven into hell. If I distressed you, I am as repentant as I can be, but I hope I have not caused you to suffer as much as I have myself. You have reproached me

oftentimes for being indifferent to everything; I suppose you meant only that I was undemonstrative. When I am not myself, it is because I am in bodily anguish. Admit that it is sad, after so long an acquaintance, and after having become the friends we are, to see you always suspicious of me. The weather to-day has been like our mood. It will clear to-night, I think. The stars shine brighter than I have ever seen them. Let us arrange some less stormy excursion. Good-bye. No more quarrels! I shall try to be more reasonable. Do you try to be ruled more by your first impulses.

LXI

March, 1843.

I was as tired as if I had walked four or five leagues, but the fatigue was so agreeable that I should like to repeat it. All was so successful, that while I am accustomed to the success of a well-arranged plan, nevertheless I share your astonishment. To be so free, and so far away from the world, and that, too, by making use of the benefits of civilisation, is it not amusing?

Do you know why I took only one blossom of those pretty white hyacinths? It was be-

cause I wished to save some for another time. What do you think of that? Besides, after consulting my map, I discovered that we had mistaken the distance, and were about a quarter of a league out of the way. We ought to have gone farther on, but we need regret nothing, and next time we shall know better. For the first time it was not bad.

You were charming. You told me nothing I did not know in saying that you returned to me what I had given you; but to hear you say this is a joy to me, for it proves that you did not mean the cruel things you said on one of our ill-omened days. I have forgotten them all to-day. Will you not, also, forget my anger and my rudeness?

You ask whether I believe in the existence of the soul. Not altogether. Nevertheless, when I reflect upon certain things, I find an argument in favour of that hypothesis. It is this: How can two animate substances give and receive a sensation by a union which would be insipid but for the sentiment attached to it? This is an extremely pedantic way of saying that when two lovers kiss each other the sensation they receive is altogether different from that felt in kissing the softest of satin. But the argument has its value. We will discuss meta-

physics, if you like, next time I see you. It is a subject which I find very interesting, because it can never be exhausted. You will write to me, will you not, before Monday to say where we shall meet? We must be there on the hour, not on the half hour. Be sure and remember it; consequently, we must start on the half hour. This is clear, is it not?

It is half past four, and I must rise before ten o'clock.

LXII

Friday, March 29, 1843.

I divine, by one of those intuitions of the mind's eye, that we shall have fine weather for several days, but it will be followed by a long siege of bad weather. On the other hand, our last walk, which was almost a failure, we should consider as not having taken place. The bears alone are the better for it. I envy them the interest you take in their welfare, and I am thinking of having me a costume made which will give me some of their charms. Hitherto, we have always walked from the east towards the south, and it might be a good idea to try the opposite direction. First we should find our starting-point, and the muddy stream that flows

near it, and we will end our walk where we usually begin it. It is devilish hard that just now I am uncommonly busy; however, if Saturday, at three o'clock, would be convenient, we could go on our voyage of discovery until half past five; if not, we shall be obliged to postpone it until Monday, which is a long time to wait.

If you knew how sweet you were the other day, you would never again be the tease you are sometimes. I wish you had been less reserved with me. At the same time, while your words were more ambiguous than the Apocalypse, I seemed to read your thoughts clearly. I wish you had the hundredth part of the pleasure which I have in following your thoughts. There are two persons in you, so you see you no longer resemble Cerberus. From three, you have come to be two. One, the better one, is all heart and soul. The other is a pretty statue, highly polished by society, gracefully draped in silk and cashmere, a charming automaton, the springs of which are adjusted with infinite skill. When one thinks he is speaking to the first, he finds he is speaking to the statue. Why must this statue be so attractive? If it were not for this, I should hope that, like the Spanish oaks, you would lose your outer bark as you grow older.

It is better for you to remain as you are, but

let the first person take the precedence over the automaton. I am getting all tangled up with my metaphors.

At this moment I am reminded of a white hand. It seems to me that I wished to scold you, but I can not remember the reason. It is I this time who am suffering with my back. The pain attacked me after my return the other day, but I can not, like you, find relief in a twelve-hours sleep. The fact is, I am not as careful of my strength as you are. I hope to have a letter from you to-morrow, but you must write another also to tell me whether it is to be Saturday or Monday. Here is a third combination: Saturday, until four o'clock, and again Monday, from two until five. This, I think, would be a perfect arrangement. I must not fail to have your reply before noon Saturday.

LXIII

Friday night, April 8, 1843.

For two days I have had a horrible headache, and you write me all sorts of dreadful things. The worst is that you have no remorse, and I had some hope that it would be otherwise. I am so downcast that I have not even the energy to abuse you.

What, then, is this miracle of which you speak? It would be a miracle to make you less self-willed, but I shall never accomplish that. It is beyond my power. I shall have to wait, therefore, until Monday to hear the solution of the enigma, since you can not come to-morrow. Do you know it will have been a week since I saw you? It has been a long time since that has happened before. To make amends, we must take a long walk, and try to avoid disputes. Two o'clock, if that suits you. I shall expect you promptly to the minute. Your idea about Wilhelm Meister is rather pretty, but, after all, it is only a sophism.

One might as well say that the memory of a pleasure is a variety of pain. This is especially true of half-pleasures, by which I mean pleasures unshared with another. You shall have those verses, if you insist upon it. You shall have, also, your portrait in Turkish dress, which I have begun. I have placed a nargile in your hand, to add to the local colour. When I say you *shall* have all this, I mean, of course, if you pay for it. But if you will not pay up gracefully, I am going to take a terrible revenge. I was asked yesterday for a drawing for an album which is to be sold for the benefit of the earthquake sufferers, and I shall give your portrait.

What do you say to it? I ask myself sometimes what I shall do in five or six weeks from now, when I shall see you no longer. I can not realise yet that it is to be.

LXIV

PARIS, *April 15, 1843.*

I have suffered such intense pain in my eyes yesterday and this morning that I could not write to you. I am a little better to-night, and the weeping has almost stopped. Your letter is somewhat amiable, which is most unusual. There are even a few expressions of affection, without any "buts" or second thoughts. We look at many things from different standpoints. You fail to understand my generosity in sacrificing myself for you. You ought to thank me as an encouragement. But you believe that all is due to you. Why is it that we agree so seldom in our point of view?

You acted sensibly in not speaking of Catullus. He is not an author whom one should read during Holy Week, and in his works are many passages impossible to translate in French. It is easy to see what love meant in Rome fifty years before Christ. It was a little better, however, than love at Athens in the time of Pericles.

Women had already gained a little importance, and compelled men to do silly things. The position of woman is due not to Christianity, as it is customary to say, but to the influence exerted on Roman society by the barbarians of the North. The Germans were idealists. They worshipped the soul. The Romans cared only for the body. Women, it is true, for many ages had no souls. They have none still in Oriental countries, which is most unfortunate. You know how two souls can hold converse. But yours is not willing to listen to mine.

I am glad to know you enjoyed those verses of Musset. You are right in your comparison of him to Catullus. Catullus, I believe, used better language. Musset made the mistake of denying the existence of the soul, just as Catullus had done. For the latter, however, there was some excuse, on account of the age in which he lived. It is a most unseasonable hour. I must stop in order to bathe my eye. As I write I weep constantly. Good-bye until Monday. Pray for sunshine. I shall bring you a book. Wear your seven-league boots.

LXV

PARIS, *May 4, 1843.*

I am unable to sleep, and am as cross as a bear. There are several things I should like to say about your letter, but I shall say none of them, on account of my bad humour, or rather, I shall try to restrain it a little. Your distinction between the two *egos* is very pretty, and is a proof of your profound selfishness. You love only yourself, and that is why you feel a sort of affection for the *ego* which resembles yours. Several times, day before yesterday, I was shocked to see this. I was thinking of it sadly enough, while you were completely absorbed in admiring the trees.

You are right to enjoy travelling on the railroad. In a few days it will be possible to go to Rouen and to Orléans in three hours. Why should we not go to see Saint Ouen? Yet what could be more beautiful than the woods where we were the other day? Only, I think you should have remained there longer. When one has sufficient imagination to give a plausible explanation for that branch of ivy, one should not be at a loss for occupation to last some time. I wonder if you have that ivy in your hair this

evening? If you have, I am sure that it will add to your coquettishness.

I am so vexed with you that you will think, it may be, that the *I* which you admire is too much in evidence. In fact, I am thinking seriously of putting into execution the threat I made you one day.

How did you enjoy the fireworks? I was at the house of an "Excellency" who has a lovely garden, from where we had a good view of them. The crowning piece was fine. They are really far more wonderful than a volcano, for art is always more beautiful than nature. Good-bye. Try to think of me occasionally.

Our walks have now become a part of my life, and I can hardly realise how I lived without them. It seems to me you take them very philosophically. But how will it be when we see each other no longer? Six months ago we resumed our conversation at the very same point where it had been interrupted. Shall we do the same again? I have an indefinable fear that I shall find you changed. Every time we meet you are enveloped in an armour of ice, which melts only after a quarter of an hour. By the time I return you will have amassed a veritable iceberg. Well, it is better not to cross the

bridge until you come to it. Let us continue our dreams.

Should you suppose a Roman capable of saying pretty things, and of showing affection? I will show you Monday some Latin verses, which you shall translate for yourself, and which fit our habitual disputes like a glove. You shall see that the ancients are a great deal better than your Wilhelm Meister.

LXVI

Wednesday, June, 1843.

Your letter was so kind and affectionate that it has blown away the last remaining cloud of the recent storm. But I feel that we shall not be sure of having forgotten it until we have buried our quarrel beneath other memories.

Why should we not take a walk Friday? If it will not inconvenience you, it will give me the greatest pleasure. I hope we shall have fine weather. You promised, moreover, to tell me something which must be too important to be deferred. I shall bring along a Spanish book, and, if you like, we will read.

You have not yet told me whether you would pay me for my lessons. The time which we spend otherwise than in what you are pleased to

call talking nonsense, seems to me so ill-employed that I ought at least to earn something for my pains. Why should I not give you Spanish lessons at your house? I could call myself Don Furlano, or something else, and bring you a letter of introduction from Madame de P. describing me as victim of Espartero's tyranny.

I am beginning to find our dependence on sunshine and rain somewhat irksome. I want, also, to paint your portrait. You have promised often to invent some plan of meeting. You pretend to govern, but, as a fact, you discharge your duties very badly, and I can judge very unfairly, therefore, of your possibilities and your impossibilities. If you were to reflect upon the delicate problem of how to see each other as often as possible, would you not be doing a worthy action? There are many other things I wish to say to you, but it would be necessary to refer to our quarrel, and I desire to blot it altogether from my memory. I want to remember only our reconciliation, which you seem to regret. That would be unkind in you. I am sorry, indeed, that I must owe so much happiness to such an unfortunate cause.

Good-bye. Consider your statue, and animate without first harassing it.

LXVII

PARIS, *June 14, 1843.*

I am delighted to learn that you are better, and very sorry that you should have wept. You misunderstand invariably the meaning of my words. You interpret as anger or unkindness what is only sadness. I can no longer recall what I said on that occasion, but I am sure that I intended to express but one thing, which was that you had grieved me sorely. All these quarrels prove how very unlike we are, and since, notwithstanding this difference, there exists between us a strong affinity—it is the *Wahlverwandschaft* of Goethe—there results inevitably a struggle in which I suffer keenly. When I say that I suffer, do not understand it as a reproach against you. Things which a moment ago seemed rose-colour to me, now look black. You know perfectly well how to efface with two words this blackness; and as I read your letter to-night I feel that, perhaps, after all, the sun is not hidden forever.

But your system of government is still the same; you make me lose my temper, after having given me moments of exquisite happiness. One more philosophical than I would enjoy the

happiness when it comes, and not trouble himself about the unhappiness. It is my misfortune to have a temperament that remembers all the wretchedness of the past when I am unhappy; but, on the other hand, I recall all the joy when I am happy. For nearly three weeks I have tried hard to forget you, but I have not succeeded any too well. The perfume which your letters breathe has proved a great barrier to my self-imposed task. Do you recollect how I noticed that Indian perfume one day when we had offended each other grievously, and were afterwards reconciled?

I am head over ears in business matters. Write to me promptly. I have been working hard, and upon some absurd affairs. I will tell you about them when I see you.

LXVIII

PARIS, *Saturday night, June 23, 1843.*

I was beginning to be extremely anxious about you. I have been afraid that you had suffered from being in the dampness so long, and blamed myself for being so tedious in telling you that silly story. Since you did not catch cold, and are not angry with me, I can now remember with pleasure every moment that we

spent together. I agree with you that on that day we were more perfectly—if perfection can be compared—happy than we had ever been before. Why was it? We said nothing, or did nothing extraordinary, unless it was that we did not quarrel. And observe, if you please, that our quarrels always begin with you. I have yielded to you on an infinite number of points, but for all that I have not been sullen about it. I should be delighted if the pleasant memory of that day would be profitable to you in the future. Why do you not tell me at once what your letter explains only so so, and yet with a certain frankness that pleases me? . . .

I am flattered to know that my story amused you. At the same time, my author's vanity is wounded that you are satisfied with my sketchy outline, for I had hoped that you would ask to read it, or to have it read to you. Since you do not care for it, however, I must be resigned. Nevertheless, if the weather is fine Tuesday, what is to prevent our sitting on our rustic bench while I read it to you? It will take but an hour. Better still, let us simply walk. Are you willing? It must be understood that there are to be no arguments. Write me your final decision. I went to the station to meet Madame de M. and her daughters, all three looking splendidly.

There is nothing definite as to my departure, although, judging from the indications, it will probably be very soon. You need not expect me, however, to say good-bye next time I see you.

LXIX

PARIS, *July 9, 1843.*

You are right to forget quarrels, if you can. As you say, very sensibly, the closer you examine them the more important they grow. It is best to dream as long as possible, and as we can always repeat the same dream, it becomes almost a reality. I am feeling better since yesterday, and slept all last night, which I had not been able to do for a long time. I believe, too, that my spirits have been lighter ever since I let off steam the other day.

It is a pity we can not meet the day after having a quarrel, for I am sure we should be in a perfectly amiable frame of mind. You promised to appoint a day, but it has not occurred to you to do so, or else, what would be even more unkind, you thought it would be an indecorous thing to do. It is this constant preoccupation of yours which is so often a cause of disagreement between us. As the hour of our

separation draws near, I become more discontented with myself, and the result is I behave as if I were discontented with you. I might have said that you hold yourself too much in check in order to please me. I catch myself incessantly flying into a rage against this restraint, which, even in its most agreeable aspect, conceals an underlying basis of sadness. But dream, therein lies wisdom. When? That is the whole question.

You ought to translate for me a German book which gets on my nerves. Nothing is more irritating than a German professor who thinks he has discovered an idea. The title is alluring. It is: *das Provocations-verfahren der Römer.*

LXX

PARIS, *July, 1843.*

Your letter is very kind, almost affectionate, indeed. I would I were in a less melancholy mood, that I might enjoy it to perfection. The best I can do is to express my appreciation of all that it contains of graciousness, and to repress the somewhat gloomy thoughts that fill my mind concerning it. It is unfortunate that I can not become so completely absorbed in my

dreams as you do. But let us leave this subject and talk of something else.

I am going away in ten days. I went to the country yesterday to make a visit, and returned very weary and very blue; weary, because I was tired out, and blue, because of the thought that it was a beautiful day wasted. Do you never chide yourself for a similar reason? I hope not. Sometimes I believe that you feel all that I feel, then come drawbacks, and I doubt everything.

Good-bye. If I write any more I shall say something that you will misunderstand. . . .

LXXI

Thursday night, July 28, 1843.

I have read your letter (the former one, I mean) at least twenty times since receiving it, and each reading has given me a new and a sorrowful sensation, but at no time have I felt the least anger. I have tried in vain to find an answer to it. I have come to any number of decisions, to no purpose, and to-night I am just as uncertain and just as downcast as when I first read it. You have guessed my thoughts well enough, perhaps not entirely. You could never divine them altogether. I am so capri-

cious, moreover, that what is true at one moment ceases to be so a little later.

You are wrong in your self-accusations. You have, I imagine, no other cause for self-reproach than that which I myself have. We allow ourselves to dream on, without wishing to awake. You and I are too old, perhaps, to let ourselves dream thus purposely. I, for my part, agree with the sentiment of that Turk; but to be *nothing*, could anything be worse than that? I have changed my opinion very much on this point.

I have been tempted several times not to write to you, not to see you. This would be quite reasonable, and the reason could be very well supported. The execution would be more difficult. By the way, you are mistaken in accusing me of not wanting to see you. I intimated no such thing. Is this another of my thoughts which you have misinterpreted? You, on the other hand, tell me so most explicitly. There is still another thing we might do: that is, not to write to each other while I am away. We may think of each other, or of any one else, and on my return meet again or not, just as inclination shall counsel. This is reasonable enough, but its execution might be embarrassing. When I am not thinking about your letter, and only of

your loveliness, do you know what I should like? I should like to see you once more.

This Hôtel de Cluny affair has retarded my departure. I ought to be now on the way, and am very much afraid that I shall not be able to sign an abominable report, where it is necessary for my name to appear, before Monday. Since you wished to see me Monday, perhaps you would have no objections to saying a final good-bye Saturday. I am wrong, it may be, to suggest this. God only knows in what sort of mood you are! After all, you are free to say yes or no. I promise you not to be angry.

LXXII

PARIS, *Thursday night, August 2, 1843.*

I am not as poetical as you. The χθὼν εὐρυοδείη, that is to say, the broad earth, in spite of the mackintosh, was colder even than you, and I caught cold; but I bear no malice. To do that I should have to read all that you say, and that you consider agreeable. How many *buts* there are always! How clever you are to deprive others of the charm which may belong to them, and to absorb it for yourself! I say charm, but I am wrong, doubtless, for I

do not believe that marmots have any. You were one of those pretty creatures before Brahma transmitted your soul into a woman's body.

To do you justice, you wake up sometimes, and, as you say yourself, it is to fall out with me. Be kind and gracious, as you know so well how to be. Notwithstanding my crossness, I had rather see you with your grand, indifferent airs than not to see you at all. I told you wisely that all that botanical collection was no good, but you will always have your own way. I have discovered things much more curious than those found in country rambles, and from less evident indications too. Take my advice, throw all those faded flowers in the fire, and let us go and look for fresh ones. Good-bye.

LXXIII

PARIS, *August 5, 1843.*

I was awaiting your letter with great impatience, and the longer it delayed the more I expected evidences of second thoughts, with all their unpleasant consequences. As I was prepared for all manner of injustice from you, your letter affected me more favourably than it would

have done at another time. You tell me that you, too, have been happy, and this assurance cancels all the others that precede and follow it. This is the best thing you have said to me for an age, and it is almost the only time when I have thought you had a heart not unlike others.

What a glorious walk that was! I am not at all ill, and I was happy enough the other day to store up health and good spirits for a long time to come. If happiness is of short duration, it can be renewed. Unfortunately, the weather is bad, and besides you speak of going away. Perhaps this rainy weather has destroyed your desire to travel. From me it takes even the energy to form new plans. If, however, there should come a good day before you leave, would it not be well for us to take advantage of it, and to say a long farewell to our park and our woods? I shall not see their trees again this year, at least, and the thought saddens me. I hope that you, too, feel the same regret. When you discover a ray of sunshine let me know, and we will visit once more our chestnut trees and our mountain. You gave me and ourselves a passing thought for one brief moment, but will the memory of it not remain for a long, long time?

LXXIV

VÉZELAY, *August 8, 1843, at night.*

I thank you for having written a word to me before my departure. It is the kind intention that has pleased me, not what your letter tells me. You say such extraordinary things. If you mean half of what you say it would be the wisest course for us not to meet again. The affection which you have for me is only a sort of mental pastime. You are all intellect. You are one of those chilly women of the North who are governed only by the mind. There are things I could say to you, but you would not understand. I prefer to assure you again of my sincere regret for having caused you pain. It was entirely unintentional, and I hope you will forgive me. Our temperaments are as unlike as our *stamina*. How can it be helped? You may divine my thoughts sometimes, but you will never be able to understand them.

Here I am in this horrible little town, perched on the top of a mountain, bored to death by the townspeople, and hard at work on a speech that I am to make to-morrow. I am in politics, and you know me well enough to realise how odious I find the business of a political campaign.

For consolation, I have a most congenial travelling companion, and an admirable church to look upon. The first time I saw this church was soon after having seen you at . . . I asked myself to-day whether we were more foolish then than we are now.

What is certain is that we had formed, probably, a very different impression of each other from the one we have to-day. If we had known then how often we should quarrel, do you suppose we would have cared to meet again? It is frightfully cold, with rain and lightning at intervals. I have a ream of official prose to spin off, and will leave you all the more cheerfully because the things I should write to you are not particularly affectionate. It is, however, the force of circumstances that irritates me most.

I go to Dijon in a few days. It would please me if you would write to me there, especially if your pen could find something less cruel to write than it did last time. You can not form an idea of one of our evenings at the inn. One of the most charming plans of which I have thought is to go somewhere in Italy to spend the time that must intervene between my political tour and the trip to Algiers. You, I fancy, are thinking of some way to be in the country

when I return to Paris. What will be the result of all these plans?

As I was leaving Paris I met M. de Saulcy, who had just received a letter from Metz. Your brother was spoken of in the highest terms, which is very gratifying to those who recommended him. I should have written this earlier but for the thousand and one annoyances incident to my departure.

Good-bye. I believe this little talk with you has made me feel better. If I had more paper, and not so many reports to prepare, I think I might be capable now of saying something affectionate. As you are aware, my attacks of temper usually end in that way.

At Dijon, General Delivery, and do not forget my titles and degrees!

LXXV

AVALLON, *August 14, 1843.*

I expected to be in Lyons the 10th, and am not within sixty leagues of that place. I shall not have any news from you until I reach Autun. If you want to be kind you will write to me again at Lyons.

Vézelay pleases me more and more. The view from there is superb, and besides it is some-

times a pleasure to be alone. As a usual thing I find myself rather dreary company, but when I am depressed, with no good reason for being so, and when this depression has in it no vestige of anger, it is then that I enjoy complete solitude. This was my mood during the last few days of my stay at Vézelay. I took long walks, or lay down on the edge of a natural terrace, which a poet might well call a precipice, and there I philosophised on the Ego, and on Providence, on the hypothesis that there be a Providence. I thought of you also, which was more agreeable than thinking of myself. But even the thought of you was not the most cheerful, because no sooner did it come to me than it occurred to my mind how happy I should be to see you here in this obscure corner of the world. And then—and then, it all ended with this other disheartening thought, that you were far, far away, that it was not easy to see you, and not even certain that you would care to see me.

My presence at Vézelay greatly mystified the population. Whenever I sketched, especially in a well-lighted room, large groups of people would assemble around me, and every one had some conjecture as to my occupation. This distinction proved a great bore, and I should

like to have had a janissary beside me to keep back the curious. Here I have become once more one of the multitude. I came to visit an old uncle whom I scarcely knew, and with whom I am obliged to stay two days. To entertain me, he has taken me to see several mutilated heads found in the excavations made nearby. I am not fond of relatives. You are compelled to be on familiar terms with people you have never seen, simply because they happen to be descended from the same grandfather that you have. My uncle, however, is a most worthy man, not especially provincial, and if we had two ideas in common I might even find him agreeable.

The women here are as homely as the women in Paris; and they have, moreover, ankles big as stumps. At Nevers the women had extremely pretty eyes. They wear no national costumes. Besides our moral perfections, we have the advantage of being the most stunted and the ugliest people of Europe.

I send you an owl's feather which I found in a gap of the Abbot's Church of the Madeleine at Vézelay. The former owner of the feather and I found ourselves for a moment face to face, each one equally startled by our unexpected encounter. The owl was less brave than I, and flew away. She had a formidable beak,

and eyes that were terrifying, besides two feathers shaped like horns. I am sending this feather to you that you may admire its softness, and also because I have read somewhere in a book of magic that when one gives a woman an owl's feather, and she places it under her pillow, she dreams of him. Will you tell me your dream? Good-bye.

LXXVI

SAINT-LUPICIN, *August 15, 1843, at night.*
Six hundred metres above the sea-level; in the midst of an ocean of lively and famished fleas.

Your letter is diplomatic. You practise the axiom that language has been given to man that he may conceal his thoughts. Fortunately for you, your postscript disarmed me. Why do you say in German what you think in French? Is it because you think only in German, that is, that you do not think at all? I am unwilling to credit it. At the same time, there are things in you which irritate me to the last degree. Why are you still shy with me? Why have you never wished before to tell me anything that would have given me so much pleasure? Do you sup-

pose that there are synonyms in a foreign language?

You can not form any conception of this place. Saint Lupicin is in the Jura mountains. It is extremely ugly, dirty, and inhabited by fleas. In a little while I shall be obliged to go to bed, where I shall repeat my experience of the nights spent at Ephesus. Unfortunately, however, when I awake there will be neither laurels nor Grecian ruins to meet my eye. What a hideous country! I think often that if the railroads were more comfortable we might go together to some such place, and then it would seem beautiful. There are flowers here in the greatest profusion; the air is remarkably pure and vigorous, so that the human voice can be heard at a distance of a league.

To prove that I am thinking of you, here is a little flower which I plucked in my walk at sunset. It is the only kind that I can send. All other varieties are colossal.

What are you doing? Of what are you thinking? You never tell me what you really think, and it is folly for me to ask you. I have had but few comfortable moments since I came away. Skies of leaden gray, all sorts of accidents, and all sorts of discomforts; a broken wheel, a bruised eye—but they are all patched

up now in some sort of fashion. But what I find most difficult to become accustomed to is solitude. I believe this year it is more unendurable than ever before. I mean solitude in the midst of life and animation. It seems to me that if I were in prison I should be more comfortable than I am tramping over the country. Nothing is more depressing. I long for our walks more than anything else. It cheers me to have you say that you still love our woods. Although my tiresome absence is to be prolonged indefinitely, nevertheless I hope we shall visit them again.

The Department of the Jura, with its mountains and cross-cuts, delays me more than ten days. I have one disappointment after another. It is as if I were still crossing my first mountain. I have not the least desire to go to Italy. It is pure imagination on your part. Your letter pleased me at times, and at others enraged me. I read sometimes between the lines the sweetest things in the world, and again you seem more chilly than usual. It is only the postscript that satisfies me. I saw it only the last thing. It is at such a great distance from the rest of the letter! If you write immediately, send it to Besançon; if not, address it to me in Paris. I do not know where I shall be a week from this time.

LXXVII

PARIS, *September, 1843.*

I am terribly dull without you, to use an expression that you affect. I did not realise the other day, clearly at least, that we were saying farewell for a long, long time. Is it true now that we shall see each other no more? We separated without speaking, almost without looking at each other. It was almost like a former occasion. I felt a sort of calm happiness, which is not usual to me. It seemed to me for a few moments that I desired nothing more. Now, if we can experience that happiness again, why should we refuse it? It is true that we may quarrel again, as we have done so many times. But what is the memory of a quarrel compared to that of a reconciliation? If you feel about this half as I do you must be anxious to go again for one of our walks. I am going away on a short journey next week. Saturday, if you like, or even the Tuesday following, we might meet.

I have not written sooner because I had persuaded myself that the suggestion to revisit our woods would come from you. I was mistaken, but I am not very much offended. You

possess the secret of making me forget many things, and of making sentiment take the place of reason. Let me see you once more. I shall have no reproaches for you. One is fortunate to be able thus to dream.

LXXVIII

PARIS, *September, 1843.*

Our letters crossed. You realise now, I hope, that my anger, which I now regret deeply, was not caused by what you imagine. Your letter proves, however, that it is impossible for us not to quarrel. We are too unlike. You are wrong to repent of what you have done. I was wrong to wish you to be other than what you are. I beg you to believe that I have not changed. I regret more than all having left you as I did, but there are moments when one can not be composed. I want to see you now that we may repeat one of our beautiful dreams of last summer, and to bid you a long farewell, leaving you with a sweet and tender mood.

You will, of course, consider my idea ridiculous. Yet it pursues me, and I can not help telling it to you. You will be quite justified in

refusing. I think I now have sufficient self-control not to lose my temper. I am not sure, however; yet whatever you decide will be right. I can only promise that I have the very best intentions to be calm and patient.

LXXIX

AVIGNON, *September 29.*

I have not heard from you for many days, and it has been almost as long a time since I have written to you. But I have a good excuse. The business in which I am engaged is extremely fatiguing. All day I must walk or drive, and at night, no matter how tired, I must despatch a dozen pages of prose. I speak of commonplace writing only, for, from time to time, I have some extraordinary piece of work to do for my minister. But, since those things are never read, I can safely indulge in all manner of nonsense.

The country that I am exploring is charming, but the people are stupid to the last degree. No one ever opens his mouth that he does not sound his own praises, from the man who wears a frockcoat to the porter. There is no sign here of the tact which distinguishes the gentleman,

and which it gave me so much pleasure to discover among the common people of Spain.

Except for this, it is impossible to find a country more like Spain. The general aspect of the landscape and of the town is the same. The workmen lie down in the shade and wrap themselves in their cloaks with an air as tragic as that of the Andalusians. Everywhere the odour of garlic and oil is mingled with that of oranges and jessamine. The streets are protected by canvas during the day, and the women have small, well-shod feet. Even the patois has in it a suggestion of the Spanish accent. Late in the season as it is, there is still a tremendous buzzing of gnats, fleas, and bugs, which are fatal to sleep. I must endure this life for two months still before looking on human beings again! I am thinking constantly of my return to Paris, and in imagination I enjoy no end of delicious moments spent with you. Perhaps the very best thing for which I long is to see you coming in the distance, and to win from you a little nod in token of recognition. . . .

You ask me for a drawing of a Roman capital. I have not a single one left. I have sent all my sketches to Paris. Besides, you would find a capital very uninteresting. The decoration consists of either devils, or dragons, or

saints. The devils belonging to the early period of Christianity have in them nothing attractive. As for the dragons and the saints, I am sure you have very slight regard for them.

I have begun to draw for you a Maçonese costume. It is the only one that I have seen which possesses any grace. Even the girdle is arranged so oddly that the most slender waist could not be distinguished from the stoutest. One must have a special kind of physical organism to wear such a costume. The cheapness of cotton-stuffs, and the ease of communication with Paris, have caused the national costumes to fall into disuse.

I gave myself a sort of sprain last night. I am writing now with one foot stretched on a chair, in a state of impatience difficult to describe. When will the swelling leave my foot? That is the question. If I were obliged to spend five or six days more in this position I do not know what would become of me. I believe I should prefer to be seriously ill rather than to be tied down as I am by such a trifling thing. At the same time, this causes me no little pain.

Avignon is full of churches and palaces, all surmounted by high towers, with machicolated battlements. The great Palace of the Popes is

an example of Middle-Age fortifications. It shows the friendly security that reigned in this land about the thirteenth or fourteenth century. In the Palace of the Popes you ascend a hundred steps of a winding stairway and then find yourself suddenly facing a wall. Turning your head, you see, fifteen feet above you, the continuation of the stairway, which can only be reached by means of a ladder. There are, also, subterranean chambers, which were used during the Inquisition. You are shown furnaces where the irons were heated to torture the heretics, and the remains of a complicated instrument, also used for torture. The inhabitants of Avignon are as proud of their Inquisition as the English are of their Magna Charta. "We," they say, "invented the *auto-da-fé*, the Spaniards only imitated us!"

At Vienna a few days ago I saw an antique statue which overthrew all my previous opinions concerning Roman statuary. I had always seen the conventional ideal of beauty exert its influence on the imitation of nature. In this instance it was altogether different. The statue represents a huge, fat woman, with enormous hanging throat, and folds of fat covering her ribs, just as Rubens painted his nymphs. It is all portrayed with a fidelity to nature amazing to

see. What would the gentlemen of the Academy say to it?

Good-bye. It is time for the post to leave. Write to me at Montpellier, and again at Carcassonne. I hope it will not be long before I shall go to find your letter, which always makes me happy.

Good-bye once more.

LXXX

TOULON, *October 2.*

It has been a long time, dear friend, since I wrote to you. As soon as my foot returned to its normal size, I felt that I must make up for lost time by touring the county of Avignon. I have learned, also, how to appreciate the difference between the gnats of Carpentras, Orange, Cavaillon, Apt, and other places. Nearly all of them possess in common the characteristic of preventing an honest man from going to sleep. I shall not tell you about the beautiful things I have seen, or the humbugs I have discovered.

But do you know what a *draquet* is? It is the same thing as a *fantasy*. I will explain the meaning of these two barbarous words. You must know, in the first place, that the wealth of

the Department of Vaucluse consists principally in silks. In every peasant's lodge silk-worms are cultivated, and silk is spun, from which arises a disagreeable odour. Very frequently, skeins of silk are found hanging on the bushes. Towards evening, there are peasant women imprudent enough to come and gather these skeins of silk, hiding them in their baskets. The basket gradually becomes heavier, with constantly increasing weight, until it puts one in a perspiration to carry it. When, after a long and fatiguing journey, the bank of a stream is reached, the basket has become absolutely insupportable, and is placed on the ground. Immediately there jumps from the basket a tiny creature, with an immense head, who moves himself by a sort of lizard's tail. Chuckling and giggling, he plunges into the stream, saying: "*M'as ben pourta!*" which signifies in Provençal, or in the idiom of the *draquets*, "You have carried me very well!" I have met more than one woman who had been hoaxed in this way by these mischievous demons, and am extremely sorry not to have made the acquaintance of one myself. I should have enjoyed it enormously.

My journey lengthens as the days grow shorter. I go to-morrow to Fréjus, and from

there to the islands of Lérins, where I may find, perhaps, the remains of the first Christian church of the West. I am more than half inclined to believe I shall find nothing at all. But one must follow one's profession conscientiously, and examine everything of historical significance.

It is impossible to find anything dirtier and prettier than Marseilles. Dirty and pretty applies equally to the women of Marseilles. They all have expressive faces, lovely black eyes, beautiful teeth, tiny feet, and imperceptible ankles. On their little feet they wear cinnamon stockings, of the colour of Marseilles mud, coarse in quality, and darned with twenty different shades of cotton. Their gowns are badly made, and are always shabby and soiled. Their beautiful black hair owes its glossiness almost entirely to the use of candle tallow. Add to this an atmosphere of garlic mixed with the fumes of rancid oil, and you have a picture of the Marseilles beauty. What a pity it is that in this world nothing should be perfect! Ah, well, they are charming, the Marseilles women, in spite of it all. It is a veritable triumph.

My evenings, which are now long, begin to be horribly tiresome. 'Tis true that I have usually volumes of letters to write and reports to

prepare for two or three ministers, but these pleasant occupations have not kept me from having the blues for the last three weeks. My dreams are as dismal as they can be, and my waking thoughts are no brighter. Not a single word from you, when I need it so sadly! If you write to me promptly, address your letter to Carcassonne. I must hear from you to cheer me up. . . .

After leaving Carcassonne I shall go to Perpignan, to Toulouse, and to Bordeaux. I hope I may find there some souvenir from you. The sketch I am making for you is not yet finished. I shall give it to you when I return to Paris. I wish you would tell me if there is something more you should like me to bring you. Here is a flower from a prickly shrub which grows near Marseilles, and which has the perfume of sweet violets.

Good-bye.

LXXXI

PARIS, *Friday morning, November 3, 1843.*

Is it possible that you mean all you write me? What, then, is this strange diffidence which prevents you from being frank, and which makes you try to invent the most extraordinary lies,

rather than let escape from you one word of truth, which would please me so much to hear? Among the good sentiments of which you speak there is one, you say, that I do not understand; and, since you do not try to make me understand it, I am unable even to guess it. I confess I am no more clever with the two others.

Do you believe in the devil? To my mind the whole thing hinges on that. If you are afraid of him, take care that he does not carry you off. If, as I imagine, the devil is out of the question in this case, it remains only to inquire whether one harms or wrongs some one else. I am telling you my catechism. I think it is better than yours, but I will not vouch for it. I have never made an effort to convert any one, but neither has any one, to the present time, been able to convert me. You reproach yourself, moreover, much more severely than I have ever reproached you. Sometimes, 'tis true, I yield to sadness and impatience; but I accuse you with nothing, except occasionally that lack of frankness which keeps me in an attitude of almost continual suspicion, forced as I am to seek for your meaning under a disguise. If I were convinced of the truth of what you said the other day I should be very unhappy, for I could not bear to make you suffer. You see,

however, that from saying sometimes one thing, sometimes another, you make me doubt everything. I no longer know what you think, what you feel. For once, at least, write to me openly.

LXXXII

PARIS, *November 16, 1843.*

I can see you now in imagination with the expression you wear sometimes; the expression of your bad days, I mean. I fear that you are not only cross with me, but also that you have taken cold. Relieve my mind at once on these two points. You were so kind and gracious that I could forgive you, I think, even a return of your bad humour, if you would but tell me that our walk did you no harm. I have slept almost all day, in that condition of semi-unconsciousness that you like. This cold weather is most discouraging. There used to be Martinmas summer, which was some consolation for the death of the leaves, but I fear that this has passed away, like so many of the things of my youth.

Write to me, dear friend. Tell me that you are well, and that my grumbling has not vexed you. You will not correct me of this fault. If I were not accustomed to think aloud when I

am with you, I should be almost tempted to be angry always, because you are then so sweet that one can not regret having caused you sorrow. However, I will think only of the moments when our thoughts were in accord, and when it seemed to me that you forgot my plaguing and your own pride.

Your letter has just been delivered to me. I thank you most heartily for it. You are just as kind and charming, as you were day before yesterday, and this is doubly appreciated, for the pleasant things that you say I know are sincere, and are not dictated by any fear of my anger. If you only realised the delight I take in one word of yours that comes from the heart, you would be less stingy of them. I hope your present mood may continue.

I suppose you enjoyed yourself tremendously at your ball last night. I went to the Opera. Ranconi was either drunk or imprisoned for debt, so it was proposed to shut the doors against us. At last, however, after continued protests on our part, they gave us " The Elixir of Love." I then returned, and corrected proofs until three o'clock in the morning.

So you fancy that the Academy fills my thoughts? I find this is the first thought I have given to it to-day. There is but scant chance

of success there. Do you know of any witchcraft that will draw my name out of the pine coffer known as a ballot-box?

LXXXIII

PARIS, *Tuesday night, November 22, 1843.*

I have learned on good authority of your exhaustion. It is the reaction from a moral to a physical attitude of obstinacy. It is difficult for me to believe that your wilfulness is altogether involuntary. Even if it were so, you would be in the wrong. What is the result? By giving ungraciously, the sacrifice that you are making is deprived of all its merit. You suffer from the pain of this sacrifice all the more keenly because you have not the consolation of knowing that it is appreciated. In your own words, you are suffering a double remorse. I have told you this more than once. You accuse me of injustice, but I think the reproach undeserved. You do not judge me fairly.

It is true that we have such different temperaments, especially such different points of view, that we can never be able to agree in judgment. I have tried not to give way to anger, with but poor success, I fear, and I ask your forgiveness. At the same time, I have made

some improvement, you will admit. Why do you wish to dispute the subject: "Which one loves the better?" The first thing to do would be to agree on the meaning of the verb, and that we shall never do. We are both too ignorant ever to be of accord, especially too ignorant one of the other. I have thought several times that I understood you, but you have always eluded me. I was right when I said you were like Cerberus: three gentlemen at once.

I am never sure whether your head or your heart is in the ascendant; you yourself do not know, but you decide always in favour of the head. It is better to quarrel than not to see each other. This seems to be the only thing entirely demonstrated. When shall we quarrel again? Do not forget that Friday is my reception day. During the last four days I have embraced about thirty of my fellow-members, principally those who, having promised me their support, have broken their word.*

* Upon the occasion of his nomination to membership in the Academy of Inscriptions and Belles-Lettres.

LXXXIV

PARIS, *December 13, 1843.*

We left each other in anger; but to-night, when I reflect upon it calmly, I regret nothing that I said, unless it be a few hasty words, for which I ask your pardon. Yes, we are great fools. We should have realised it sooner. We should have seen how contrary were our sentiments and our feelings about everything. The concessions we have made to each other have had no other result than to make us more unhappy. More far-seeing than you, I blame myself bitterly for this mistake. To prolong an illusion of which I should never have dreamed, I have caused you the keenest anguish.

Forgive me, I pray you, for I, too, have suffered. I would I could leave with you more joyous memories of me. I hope you will attribute to circumstances the vexation I may have caused you. Never in your presence have I appeared as I wished to be, or rather as I had intended to appear in your eyes. I had too much self-confidence. My heart has sought to struggle against that which my better judgment has demonstrated. Everything considered, perhaps you will come to see in our folly only its

lovely side, to remember none but the moments of happiness which we have spent together. I do not upbraid you in any way. You have tried to reconcile two incompatible beings, and you have not succeeded. Should I not be grateful to you for having tried to accomplish for me the impossible?

LXXXV

PARIS, *Tuesday night, 1843.*

All day I have expected a letter from you. This is not what has kept me from writing before, but I have been frightfully busy. I believe the fine weather to-day has had a solacing effect on my mood. I am no longer angry, even if I was so, and I can think with less sorrow of your lecture of yesterday. The clouds, perhaps, are greatly to blame for what happened between us. Once before we quarrelled in stormy weather; it is because our nerves get the better of us. I have a strong desire to see you, and to know your state of mind. Suppose we attempt to-morrow to take that walk in which we failed so disastrously yesterday? What do you think of it? Your pride will, of course, not respond to this suggestion, but I am now appealing to your heart.

It will be very kind of you to send me an answer before noon to-morrow, whether you will or will not come. Do not come, however, if you are in a bad humour or if you have a previous engagement, and, above all, if you have the slightest doubt that our walk will obliterate the hideous impressions of yesterday.

LXXXVI

PARIS, *Saturday night, January 15, 1844.*

I am grieved to know that you are ill, but you must permit me to form my own opinion as to the manner in which you caught this cold. An accident of this kind seldom keeps one in the house; still more seldom does it confine one to the house as long as you remain there. All your illnesses have occurred too conveniently not to be a little suspicious. Formerly you were more unreserved. You wrote me simply a page of reproaches, and admitted that you were angry. Now you follow a different system. You write me sweet little coquettish notes, and say you have taken a sudden cold, or that you are ill. I believe I prefer the former method. Luckily, you get over your sulks and recover from your illnesses.

I hope to see you Tuesday in a cheerful

mood, if you think it worth while to be agreeable. Your treatment of me is like the sun, which appears only once in a month. If I were in better spirits, I could pursue the comparison still further; but I, too, am ill, only I am not so fortunate as you in being petted by all who come near me, and of being fond of tea made of dates and figs.

You ask me to make you a sketch of our woods. This would be almost impossible without seeing them again. You can no longer remember Bellevue, you say; you should understand, therefore, how difficult it would be for me to draw it from memory. Besides that, I am not as close an observer as you. When with you I see nothing else. Yes, these woods are beyond belief, so close to Paris as they are, and yet so far away. If you insist upon it, I will do the best I can, but you must first tell me what you want to have, that is, what part of the woods.

Good-bye. I am not especially pleased with you. A month passed without seeing you is a little too much. I have, to-morrow and the day after, two unpleasant duties to perform. I will tell you about them. Good-bye.

LXXXVII

PARIS, *February 5, 1844.*

You chide me for my harshness, and, perhaps, with some reason. It seems to me, however, that it would be more reasonable for you to call it anger or impatience. It might also be fitting on your part to reflect whether this anger or this harshness is justifiable or not.

Consider if it is not a most discouraging thing for me to be engaged in an incessant struggle with your pride, and to see your pride get the better of me. I confess that I fail to understand your meaning when you speak of your obedience, which always puts you in the wrong, and which gives you no credit for anything you do. The contrary, it seems to me, is nearer the truth; but on your part it is a question of neither wrong nor merit. Recall for a moment frankly what you are to me. You agree to come with me on those walks which are my life; but your coldness, perpetually renewed, which disheartens me more and more; the pleasure designed, or, as I prefer to believe, instinctive, which you take in making me desire that which you refuse obstinately, may be an excuse for my harshness.

If you have done any wrong, however, it is most certainly that you let your pride take the precedence over your affections. The first sentiment is to the second as a colossus to a pygmy. Your pride is, in reality, only a variety of selfishness. Will you some day abandon this grievous fault, and be as lovable to me as you know how to be? Willingly would I accept this condition, if you would promise to be entirely frank, and if you had the courage to keep your promise. It would be for me, perhaps, a sad experience; nevertheless, I should accept it joyfully, since in any case you would be happy, you say.

Good-bye, and may it not be for long. Wear your seven-league boots, and we shall have a lovely walk; if the weather were no worse than it has been for several days, you would run no risk of catching cold. I am suffering severely from headache and dizziness, but I hope you will cure me.

LXXXVIII

PARIS, *March 12, 1844.*

That is all right. As if I had not vexations enough of every kind! A hundred calls to make! A library which orders me to write and discuss forty pages of prose matter! Proofs to correct!

It seems to me that, knowing all this, you might at least send me a few lines of encouragement. I have almost reached the end of my courage, and of my patience. Fortunately, it will all end next Thursday.* Thursday, at one o'clock, I shall become once more an ordinary biped. In the meantime, is it too much to ask you to send me a few words of affection, such as you found to say the last time I saw you? It is three o'clock, and I must leave you for my proofs of *Mademoiselle Arsène Guillot.* Monday, or, rather, Tuesday.

LXXXIX

Thursday night, March 15, 1844.

It † has pleased me the more keenly because I expected to be defeated. The returns were reported to me as they were counted. It seemed impossible for me to win. My mother, who had been suffering for several days from an acute attack of rheumatism, was cured on the spot. Now I have all the greater desire to see you. Come and find out if I love you more or less, and that as soon as possible. I am now suffer-

* His election to the French Academy occurred the 14th, two days after this letter was written.

† His election to membership in the French Academy.

ing for all the visits I have made, for I must thank everybody, friends and enemies alike, to show that I am magnanimous. I had the good fortune to be black-balled by some men I detest, for it is a cause for thankfulness not to be obliged to carry a burden of gratitude to people whom you dislike. Write to me, I pray you, and tell me when you will allow me to see you.

I have a great desire to take a long walk with you.

You are a witch, indeed, to have foreseen the result as you did. My Homer deceived me, or, it may be, it was to M. Vatout that his threatening prediction was directed.

Good-bye, dearest friend! Between my proof-reading, my reports to make out, and, in a measure also, the worry that I have endured for three days, I have scarcely found time to sleep. I am going to try now. I have some amusing incidents to tell you of men and things.

XC

March 17, 1844.

I thank you for your congratulations, but I want something more. I want to see you, and take a long walk. I think you have taken the matter too tragically. Why do you weep? The

forty seats were not worth one little tear. I am exhausted, used up, demoralised, and completely out of my wits. Besides this, *Arsène Guillot* made a notorious *fiasco*, and raised against me a storm of indignation of all the so-called virtuous people, especially of the fashionable women who dance the polka and go to hear the sermons of P. Ravignan. At all events, it was reported that I behave like the monkeys, who climb to the top of the trees, and then, from the uppermost branch, make grimaces at the world beneath them. I am sure that this scandalous story has cost me many votes; but I have won them from another side. There are certain members who black-balled me seven times and who now assure me that they were my warmest partisans. Do you not think that all this is well worth the trouble of lying, especially for the goodwill I bear these people? This world in which I have lived almost exclusively for the last two weeks makes me wish all the more ardently to see you. We, at least, are sure of each other, and when you tell me fibs I can scold you for them, and you know how to win my forgiveness. Love me, venerable as I have become during the last three days.

XCI

PARIS, *March 26, 1844.*

I fear the address may have seemed a little long to you. I hope it was not as cold where you were as it was on my side. I am still shivering. We ought to have taken a short walk after the ceremony. You noticed what a shocking cough I have. It might have been considered almost as intentional. Before the meeting the orator insisted that I should tell him in what part of the hall was sitting the lady to whom he had sent the invitations. Did you like him better in his costume than in a dress suit? You may persuade me of many things, but you will never be able to convince me that you were not speaking seriously about cakes when you were hungry. I uphold the use of my adjective, and you yourself even have recognised the justice of it. That was readily proved by your anger. You say you can only dream and amuse yourself. You know, besides that, how to conceal your thoughts, and this is what grieves me. Why is it, when we have become all we are to each other, that you must reflect for several days before replying frankly to the simplest question of mine? One would suppose that you sus-

pected traps set for you on every side. Goodbye. I was delighted to see you there. I had some difficulty in finding you, hidden away behind your neighbour's bonnet. Another example of your childishness! Did you see what I sent you, in full view of the Academy? But you are never willing to see anything.

XCII

Monday night, March, 1844.

I am beginning, I imagine, to solve your enigma. Upon reflection, by a sort of instinctive divination, I have come to the following conclusion: without doubt, my most dangerous enemy to your heart, or, if you prefer, my strongest rival, is your pride. Whatever wounds that, excites your indignation. This notion you carry out, perhaps unconsciously, in the most trifling matters. Is it not, for instance, your pride which is satisfied when I kiss your hand? This, you have said to me, makes you happy, and to this sensation you abandon yourself, because a demonstration of humility is gratifying to your pride. You are willing that I should be a statue, so that you may breathe life into my soul, but you are not willing, in your turn, to be a statue; above all, you are unwilling that this

equality of happiness should be reciprocal, because anything like equality is distasteful to you.

What am I to say to all this? If your pride would be content with my obedience and humility, it ought to be satisfied; I shall yield to it always, provided it allows your heart to follow its good impulses. So far as I am concerned, I shall never place in the same rank my happiness and my pride, and if you were to suggest to me any new forms for my humility to assume, I should adopt them unhesitatingly. Yet, why should there be any question of pride, that is to say, selfishness, between us? Is the joy of self-forgetfulness for the other's sake a matter of indifference to you? That extraordinary sentiment of affection which we both sometimes feel, which this morning, for instance, took us where we had not the slightest reason for going—is not the influence of such an emotion far sweeter and more intense than that exerted by your demon of pride? You were so sweet this morning that I am both unwilling and unable to scold you. Nevertheless, I am in a beastly humour.

I told you I was invited to a tiresome dinner. Only fancy, I made a mistake in the day, and mortally offended the people, who were not expecting me, and who, in my turn, tired me to

death. I spent the entire evening lamenting that I had not remained at home with my thoughts. I am now expecting a disagreeable letter from you. I wanted to write to you first, because I shall be furious, without doubt, day after to-morrow. How did you endure the cold the other day? Does the cold to-day not daunt you? I do not know whether you had better go out to-morrow. I fear to take the responsibility of advising you, and prefer that you should decide. More humility for you!

XCIII

STRASBURG, *April 30, 1844.*

I am still here, thanks to the procrastination of the Municipal Council. I was obliged to spend one day making use of all my most stately eloquence to persuade them to restore an old church. They reply that they need tobacco more than monuments, and that they intend to make a shop of my church. I shall leave to-morrow for Colmar, and hope the next day, that is, Thursday, to be in Besançon. I shall remain there only long enough to lay a few flowers on Nodier's tomb, and then I shall try to return quickly to our woods. The season here seems more advanced than in Paris. The country is

exquisite, of a green that no painter could reproduce.

I am glad to find you so merry; I can not say as much for myself. I believe I have fever every night, and I am in a horrible mood. The cathedral, which I used to admire so extravagantly, now appears ugly, and even the wise and foolish Sabine virgins of Steinbach have barely found favour in my eyes.

You are right to love Paris. It is, after all, the only city in which one really lives. Where else should we find such promenades, such museums, where we have quarrelled so many times, and said so many tender words also? I should like to believe your promise, that we shall continue our interrupted conversation as if we had never parted. I am sure of what awaits me. A thick crust of ice will envelop you, and you will not even recognise me. Yet, even though there be another scene, that is better than not to see you at all.

Good-bye.

XCIV

PARIS, *Saturday, August 3, 1844.*

I suppose you went to the country, taking French leave, in spite of your promises. That is very kind of you. I have been silly enough

to expect every day some sign from you. It is difficult for one to change his habits. In case you should be in Paris, which is scarcely probable, or in case, which is still more improbable, that you should care to attend a meeting of the Academy, I have two cards of admission for you. It will be very tiresome. Meanwhile, I have done my best in my difficult task, which is almost finished. I shall then go away for a month or two. If this caused you any regret, or, what I should like better, the wish to see me, you could make me soon forget my moroseness.

XCV

PARIS, *August 19, 1844.*

It is settled definitely that I am to leave for Algiers from the 8th to the 10th of next month. I shall remain there, or, rather, I shall travel here and there until driven away by the fever or the rainy season. In any case, I shall not see you before January. You ought to have thought of that before going away. When I say that you shall not see me until next year, I mean that it will depend on you. While you have been learning Greek, I have been studying Arabic, but it seems to me a diabolical language, and I shall never succeed in knowing two words of it.

Apropos of Syra, that chain which you like has been in Greece, and in many other places besides. I selected it because it is of very antique workmanship, and I fancied it would please you. Does it recall our long walks and our interminable conversations?

I dined Sunday with General Narvaez, who was entertaining in honour of his wife's birthday. There were scarcely any but Spanish women present. I saw one who is trying to starve herself for love, and is gradually and quietly passing away. This mode of death must seem to you the height of cruelty. There was another, Mademoiselle . . . whom General Serrano stationed there for his Catholic Majesty; but she is far from dead, and even appears to be in excellent health. There was also Madame Gonzalez Bravo, a sister of the actor Romea, and sister-in-law of the same Majesty, who has, it is said, an immense number of sisters-in-law. This one is extremely pretty and clever.

Good-bye. . . .

XCVI

PARIS, *Monday, September, 1844.*

We parted the other day equally vexed the one with the other. We were both wrong, for

it was simply the force of circumstances that was to blame. It would have been better not to meet for a long time. It is evident that we can not see each other without disagreeing. We both want the impossible: you, that I should be a statue; I, that you should not be one. Each new proof of the impossibility of that which in our hearts we have never doubted causes bitterness to us both. I regret all the distress I may have caused you. I am too ready to yield to my absurd quick temper. As well get into a passion because ice is cold.

I hope you will forgive me now. I am no longer angry, only very sorrowful. I should not feel so bad if we had not parted as we did. Farewell, since we can be friends only at a distance. When we have grown old, perhaps we shall meet again with pleasure. Meanwhile, in happiness or in distress, do not forget me. I asked you this, I don't know how many years ago. We hardly ever thought then of quarrelling.

Again, good-bye, while I have the courage to say it.

XCVII

PARIS, *Thursday, September 6, 1844.*

It seems to me like a dream that I have seen you. We were together such a little time that

I told you nothing of what I wished to say. You yourself appeared to be uncertain whether I was a reality. When shall we meet again? I am at present engaged in a most servile and tiresome business, that of canvassing for membership in the Academy of Inscriptions. Some of my experiences are ridiculous, and I am often tempted strongly to laugh at myself, a temptation which I repress, however, for fear of shocking the gravity of the Academicians. I have embarked upon this business—or, rather, others have pushed me into it—somewhat blindly. My chances are not bad, but the solicitation of votes is most repugnant to me, and the worst feature of the whole thing is that I must wait such an age for the result, certainly until the last of October, and perhaps longer.

I am uncertain whether I shall be able to go to Algiers this year. My one consoling thought is that I shall then remain in Paris, and shall, therefore, see you. Will that give you any pleasure? Tell me that it will, and humour me. I have become so callous from all these tiresome visits that I need all the tender indulgence you can grant me to put a little new courage and energy into me.

You have no cause to be jealous of the Academy. It is, of course, a matter of self-

interest for me to win, just as I should wish to win a game of chess with a skilful adversary, and yet, I fancy, neither losing nor winning will affect me a quarter as much as one of our quarrels. But what an obnoxious business is that of canvassing for votes! Have you ever seen dogs entering a badger's hole? After they have had some experience in this occupation, they make, on entering, a desperate show of fierceness, and not infrequently come out much faster than they go in, for the badger is an ugly beast to visit. I never touch the doorbell of an Academician's that I am not reminded of the badger, and compare myself, in my mind's eye, to the dog I have just described. I have not yet been bitten, however, but I have had some ludicrous encounters.

Good-bye.

XCVIII

PARIS, *September 14, 1844.*

All our preparations were made to start today, when there came a commotion which scattered our plans to the winds. There was a collision between the Department of War and the Department of the Interior. War will not have us. We shall remain, therefore, or, to be more accurate, I am not going to Africa. I shall be

out of town on business for a fortnight, and shall then return to Paris. Aside from the vexation one feels when a plan miscarries, and the keen regret for having wasted two months in acquiring a lot of useless information, I am taking my disappointment with the greatest imperturbability. Perhaps you can guess why.

In your last letter there are several disagreeable sentences, about which I might well pick a quarrel with you, were it not that I find it profitless—as you say you do—and, what is even worse, dangerous and depressing to dispute with each other at a distance.

I can not imagine how you spend the twenty-four hours of the day. I am able to guess how you employ fourteen of them, but I should like to be informed in detail as to the other ten. Do you still read Herodotus? What a pity that you do not attempt a little of the original, with the translation of Larcher, which you have, I think. You would encounter no difficulties, except the excessive use of the Ionian η. If you can get a copy of Zenophon's *Anabasis,* you might enjoy it, especially if you have a map of Asia beside you as you read. I no longer remember *The Dialogues of the Sea-gods* (of Lucian). Read, rather, *Jupiter Convicted* or *Jupiter the Tragedian,* or even *The Festival* or *The La-*

pethæ, unless you are keeping them for me as a surprise.

I am sure you are looking smart with your dazzling gowns and your flowers, and yet I am taking it on myself to advise Greek readings for you! Good-bye. Write to me soon, and do not ridicule me. I am going away Monday to gracious knows where, but it will not be far, according to all indications.

XCIX

POITIERS, *September 15, 1844.*

If I have delayed a reply to your letter of last month, which I found on my arrival here, it is not, as your guilty conscience will whisper, in retaliation for your remissness in sending me any word of yourself. You let ten days pass without even so much as thinking of writing me a line, which was very bad of you.

You speak in your letter of your reflections while at D. I suppose you enjoyed yourself there very much, and I am compelled to believe that you enjoy yourself only when you have an opportunity to play the coquette. Since leaving Paris I have had the most tedious sort of time. Like Ulysses, I have seen many customs, men, and cities, and I have found them all hide-

eously ugly. Then, I have had fever several times, which has surprised and also annoyed me, for it means that I am losing health. The country about here is the most level and the most uninteresting in France; yet there are a great many woods, with magnificent trees, and solitudes where I should love to have met you.

Your memory is now associated in my mind with a host of places, but I like to think of you especially in the woods and the museums. If it is any pleasure to you to know that you occupy a place—a large place, too—in my thoughts, you may be gratified to know that you are not forgotten in the midst of the busy life I am leading. Each tree recalls such and such a conversation. I spend my time meditating on our rambles.

I applaud Scribe most heartily for having made a virtuous and non-Catholic audience laugh at the expense of virtue. I am equally astonished at what you tell me of his delivery. Formerly he read like a cabby. One must believe that it is the Academic uniform which imparts this self-possession, and this thought consoles me not a little.

Since leaving Paris I have not unrolled my dissertation twice. If this continues, I do not believe, really, that I shall be able to change a

line of it, and I have no doubt that at the last moment I shall be terror-stricken because of the quantity of nonsense I have allowed to remain. Until I have really set my sails in the direction of Paris I shall not know with any certainty the date of my departure. If the government does not compel me to go farther than Saintes, I fancy we shall reach Paris about the same time. What happiness if I could see you the next day! Good-bye. Write to me at Saintes; I expect to reach there soon, and to remain several days.

C

PARTHENAY, *September 19, 1844.*

Your letter, which I received while at Saintes, proved a slight diversion to the tribulations which I endured there. I was forcibly prevented from plunging into despair four thousand of my fellow-citizens who sent delegations to me with extravagant appeals.

Between my sense of duty and my natural tenderness of heart, I was miserably unhappy. Finally, I took the wisest course, and acted the proconsul, but I shall not dare to show my face in Saintes next year. I observe with delight that you still remember Paris. I feared you had

forgotten our woods and our grassy sward. As for me, every day makes me more eager to see them again, especially now that I have started towards Paris. From the indications, I shall reach there in advance of you. I shall be there in ten days at the latest, barring accidents impossible to foresee.

And you? This is the all-important thing. To be in Paris without you will seem infinitely harder than tramping over the country, as I am doing at present. I am thirsting to see you, with a craving which to you is incomprehensible. Can you, will you come once more to say farewell to your domains on the left bank? I try not to think about it, but I can not succeed. In order to prepare myself for disappointments, like *Scapin* returning from his travels, I try to imagine your ladyship as a statue, armed against me as she has sometimes appeared. 'Tis of no use; I can picture you only as you were the last time we were together, seated so comfortably on a mass of rock. To tell the truth, I think of this because, in the first place, you gave me your promise, and again, I can never persuade myself that we have changed, united in thought as we have been in our separation. If you have any thought of returning, write to me at Blois, where I shall soon be.

After the twenty-fifth, write to me in Paris, and tell me when I shall see you, and make it as soon as possible. I am writing to you from a wretched town, infested with owls, and with but one abominable inn, where they keep up an infernal noise. I find so many hairs in my food that I can hardly eat. I saw to-day at Saint-Maixent women who dressed their hair in the style of the fourteenth century, and with bodices belonging to almost the same period, which were made so as to show the shirt, which was of coarse linen, buttoned below the neck and split open like that worn by men. In spite of the gingerbread on the lower edge, it seemed to me very pretty. I almost sprained my hand to-day, and it is not strong enough to write longer.

Good-bye.

CI

PERPIGNAN, *November 14.*

You have been such a long time writing to me that I began to be very uneasy. Besides, I have been harassed by an absurd idea which I have not dared to tell you before. I was visiting the amphitheatre at Nîmes with an architect of the department, who was explaining to me at length the repairs which he had made there, when I saw, ten feet away, a lovely bird, a little

larger than a tomtit, with a linen-gray body and wings of red, black, and white. This bird was perched on a cornice, gazing at me fixedly. I interrupted the architect, who is a great sportsman, to ask him the name of the bird. He told me he had never seen one like it. I approached, and, until I was close enough to touch it, the bird did not take flight, perching a few steps beyond, and still watching me. Wherever I went, the bird seemed to follow, for I saw it on every tier of the amphitheatre. It had no companion, and its flight was noiseless, like that of a bird of night.

The next day I returned to the amphitheatre, and there was my bird again. I had brought some bread with me, which I threw to it. The bird looked at the food, but would not touch it. I then tempted it with a big grasshopper, thinking from the shape of the bill that it would eat insects, but the bird paid no attention to the grasshopper. The most learned ornithologist in the city told me that no birds of that species lived in the country.

Finally, when I visited the amphitheatre for the last time, I found my bird again, still pursuing my steps, following me even into a narrow, dark corridor, where, bird of light that it was, it should not have dared to venture.

I recalled then that the Duchess of Buckingham had seen her husband in the form of a bird the day of his assassination, and the thought came to me that you were dead, perhaps, and that you had assumed this form in order to visit me. In spite of myself I could not shake off this foolish idea, and I was delighted, I assure you, to see that your letter bore the date of the day when I had first seen my inexplicable bird.

I arrived here during atrocious weather. A rain, the like of which is never seen in the north, has deluged the entire country, cutting up the roads and transforming the rivulets into great rivers. It is impossible for me to leave the city to go to Serrabonne, where I have business. I do not know how long this condition of things will continue.

There is a fair in progress at Perpignan. Besides, most of the Spaniards fleeing from the epidemic come to this town, so that I have not been able to find lodgings at any of the inns. Had I not succeeded in exciting the sympathy of a hat manufacturer I should have been compelled to sleep in the street. The little room in which I am writing is very cold, and I am sitting before a smoky chimney-place, execrating the rain which beats against my window-panes. The

servant who attends me speaks only Catalonian, and understands me only when I speak in Spanish. I have no books, and do not know a soul in the place. Finally, and worse than all, if a north wind does not rise I shall be obliged to stay here I don't know how long. I am unable even to return to Norbonne, for the bridge which might assure my retreat is unsafe, and should the water rise it will be carried away. An admirable situation this for reflection and for writing one's thoughts. But as for thoughts, I have none left. I can only fume and fret, and have hardly sufficient energy even to write to you. You do not mention having received a letter which I wrote you at Arles. Perhaps it crossed with yours.

I went to the fountain of Vaucluse, where I was tempted to inscribe your name; but there were so many wretched verses there, so many Sophies and Carolines, etc., that I did not wish to desecrate your name by putting it in such bad company. It is the wildest spot imaginable, with nothing there but water and rocks. The only vegetation is a fig-tree which has pushed its way, somehow or other, up through the rocks, and a few lovely capillary plants, of which I enclose a specimen. When you have taken capillary syrup for a cold, you have not known,

perhaps, that this plant had such a charming form.

I shall be in Paris about the 15th of next month. I do not know which route I shall take. It is possible that I may return by way of Bordeaux, but if the weather does not improve I shall go by way of Toulouse. In that event I shall reach Paris a fortnight earlier. I shall hope to find a letter from you at Toulouse. If it does not come I shall be mortally offended with you.

Good-bye.

CII

PARIS, *December 5, 1844.*

I had sworn not to write to you, but I am not sure that I could have kept my promise much longer. I did not know, however, that you were suffering. Our walk was so charming that I did not think it possible you could have retained an unpleasant memory of it. Apparently, what annoys you is that I am more stubborn than you. That is a fine reason, is it not, and one of which you should be proud? Should you not rather be ashamed of yourself for having made me so? And then you say that I was harsh, and ask me if I did not realise it? Indeed, no. Why did

you not mention it then? If I was so, I beg your pardon. It seems to me that when we parted you gave not the slightest evidence of resentment against me. I supposed that you felt as confidential, as friendly towards me as I did to you. Shall I tell you that this was the sweetest memory I have preserved of our meeting? When I see you so, it makes me very happy. If you were angry at the time, it does credit to your power of dissimulation. But I prefer to believe in your second impulses, rather than that you were insincere. Tell me if I am mistaken.

This evening I began the drawing that you ordered. It is difficult to do, and I should like to have your instructions. Do you really insist on that field of thistles? You say you consider it one of the most beautiful places in the world. I shall bring you the sketch I have made, and also your portrait. I have given your eyes their wicked expression, but do not believe that this is how they look usually. I know a better expression, which I love all the more because I see it so seldom. You shall see it all, however, and I shall hear what you have to say about it. When you come to pay me, you will be good enough to remember that I am not an ordinary painter, and that it is not the work for which you are to

pay, it is the trouble and the time. Besides this, it is well always to show generosity towards artists.

While you were recovering from your indignation I have been almost vexed with you. I fancied you would write sooner. It is in part from having expected your letter, and in part owing to a foolish sentiment of pride that I did not anticipate you with a letter. You observe that I accuse myself also for my faults. Pardon me for my injustice; it was not anything in the past, at least, that made me unfair towards you.

Since I saw you I have been ill almost continuously. I think it was due to the Spanish lesson on the "broad earth," as Homer says. Your letter cured me. I think now it was your manner of leaving me that was responsible for my illness. You did not deign to turn your head to say good-bye. We shall have many pardons to ask of each other, when we meet, for all our uncharitable thoughts!

It is horribly late, my fire has gone out, and I am shivering with cold. Once more good-bye, and I thank you from my heart for having written. I waited a week for your letter. Are you not also stubborn?

CIII

PARIS, *Thursday, February 7, 1845.*

* Everything passed better than I expected. I found that I was unusually self-possessed. I do not know if the audience was as satisfied with me as I was with it.

CIV

Friday, February 8, 1845.

Since you did not think me ridiculous, all is well. I should not have been happy to know you were there, looking at my coat of tarragon colour, and my face ditto. Why not to-morrow? Otherwise we should have to wait until next Wednesday, and I have not the courage for that. We have a great many things to tell each other. If I had seen you there I should have lost all my serenity.

CV

TOULOUSE, *August 18, 1845.*

I have just found your letter at this place, which is very fortunate, indeed, for I was furious

* The occasion of his reception at the French Academy.

not to have any news from you at Poitiers, as I had expected. You will say, in reply, that I had no business to expect you to think of me sooner than you have done. How could I help it? I can not become accustomed to your ways. You are never so near forgetting me as when you have tried to persuade me that you were thinking of me. Happily for me, between these periods of forgetfulness there are oases of recollections, and it is of these that I think without ceasing.

I see none of those beautiful grottoes of which you tell me, and have no need of them in order that my mind should be filled with thoughts both sad and gay. When it comes to scenery, I am not hard to please, as you know very well. When out walking with you I pay no attention to the scenery.

I should like to flatter you as you ask me to do, but I am in too bad a humour. For two weeks I have been in a continuous rage, first with the weather, then with the architects, and finally with you and myself. The weather, which has been abominable all this time, cleared unexpectedly yesterday, but the heat is now overpowering, accompanied by a sirocco, which is most exhausting to the vitality. I spent twenty-four hours at the home of a representa-

tive, and if I had ever had the ambition to be a politician, that visit would have caused me to change my mind. What an occupation! What kinds of people one must visit, and be on good terms with, and flatter! I will say with Hotspur: "I had rather be a kitten and cry mew." If one must be a slave, I prefer the court of a despot: most despots, at least, wash their hands.

I regret to learn that you were starting so late for D., which means, I fear, that it will be an age before you return. What enables me to endure my present occupation with patience is the thought that upon my return I shall see you again standing beside the lions of the Institute, and that after you have plagued me to death for a quarter of an hour you will make me forget all my troubles. How long shall you remain at D.? This is what I am now anxious to know.

You will go, very likely, to England, and Lady M. will once more expound all her beautiful theories about the baseness of falling in love. I should like to be sure that yours would be the first friendly face to greet me on my return. Unfortunately, this can not be, and you will wait until every leaf has fallen before returning to Paris. God only knows if you will not come back three-quarters an Englishwoman. Give me your promise that this will not be,

that you will try not to stay away too long, and that you will not be any worse on your return than you are now. You are well enough as you are.

Write to me at Montpellier, from which place I am going to bring you a hand-bag. Write again to Avignon. I am planning my time so that I shall return September 20. This will be difficult to accomplish, but I hope to succeed in it.

Good-bye. Your letter ends very nicely, but why do you never speak to me in the way you sometimes write?

CVI

AVIGNON, *September 5, 1845.*

I am grateful to those people who fell ill and detained you in Paris; and even more grateful to yourself, that is, if you think less about their rheumatism than you do of the pleasure you will give me by remaining. In all probability I shall return in a fortnight, or, rather, I shall stop over for a little while at home between my journey from the South and that North. The next one, I hope, will be but a brief one, not even long enough for you to miss me.

I am rejoiced to know that you are in such

robust health. I can not say as much for myself, for I have been ill ever since I came away. I had counted on the lovely weather and warm sunshine of Languedoc to work a cure for me, but I have been disappointed. I returned yesterday in an exhausted condition from a long business errand, in which I caused more vexation than I do ordinarily, except where you are concerned. I am suffering from dizziness, and almost everything appears to my vision in double.

While you are enjoying ripe, luscious peaches, I am eating very acid yellow ones, of a singular flavour, but which are not specially unpleasant to the taste. I should like to have you try them. I am eating figs of all varieties, but have no appetite for any of these things.

The evenings are terribly lonely, and I am beginning to long for the society of bipeds of my own class. The provincials I do not consider as anybody at all. They are tiresome creatures to look at, and altogether foreign to the circle of my ideas. These Southerners are strange people: I think sometimes that they are witty, and again that they are only vivacious. They seem to me this time more unattractive than usual. As I travel this pretty country, the only thing which I should really enjoy would

be to dream at my leisure, and for this I have no time. You can guess, can you not, of what I should love to dream, and with whom?

I should like to tell you several good stories, which are well worth sending two hundred leagues, but, unfortunately, none that I have heard will bear repeating.

I saw, the other day, the ravages wrought by a flood, in which a hundred and twenty sheep were drowned, and many houses swept away. You can beat that in Paris, but what you will never see there is a view comparable to that which is unfolded at every step one takes as he travels through the region of Avignon. Come and see it, or, rather, wait for me in Paris, and we will stroll in our woods, which will then be lovely. Write to me at Vézelay (Yonne).

CVII

Barcelona, *November 10, 1845.*

Here I am, having reached the end of my long journey without encountering either brigands or impassable rivers, which is still more unusual. I was cordially received by the registrar, who had my work-table and my record books already arranged for me, and where I shall certainly lose the little eyesight that still remains

to me. To reach his *despacho*, one has to pass through a Gothic room, built in the fourteenth century, and a marble court-yard, where there are orange trees as high as our roofs, all laden with ripe fruit. It is most poetic, as is also my apartment, which, in point of luxuries and comforts, reminds me of the caravansaries of Asia.

One is, however, more comfortable here than in Andalusia, but the natives are in all respects inferior to the Andalusians. They have, moreover, one crowning fault in my eyes, or, rather, in my ears; that is, that I can not understand one word of their jargon. While at Perpignan I saw two superb gipsies shearing some mules. I spoke to them in *caló*, to the great horror of the Colonel of Artillery who was with me; but he discovered that I was more familiar with it than they, and that they bore striking testimony to my knowledge, of which I was not a little proud.

To sum up the results gained from my journey, I feel that they were not worth the trouble of travelling so far to get, and that I might just as well have finished my story without coming to disturb the venerable dust on the archives of Aragon. This is an admission of honesty on my part, of which my biographer, I hope, will take account. On my journey, when I was not sleeping, that is to say, for nearly the whole

route, I built thousands of air castles, which lack only your approval. Reply immediately, and write the address in very large and legible characters.

CVIII

MADRID, *November 18, 1845.*

I have been here a week or more. It is extremely cold, with occasional rains, a climate quite like that of Paris. The only difference is that I look out daily on mountains whose summits are hidden in snow, and that I am living on familiar terms with several very beautiful Velasquez paintings. Thanks to the unspeakable slowness of the people of this country, I began only to-day to poke my nose into the manuscripts which I came to consult. An academic deliberation was necessary to grant me permission to examine them, and I can not say how much stratagem in order to obtain information of their existence. After all, it seems a very small matter, and not worth the trouble of such a long journey. I think I shall have concluded my researches in good time, which is to say, before the end of the month.

I find everything here wonderfully changed since my last visit. People who were friends

when I left have become mortal enemies. Many of my former acquaintances are now great lords, and are excessively overbearing. In short, I care less for Madrid in 1845 than in 1840. People think aloud, and no one inconveniences himself for another. Their frankness is most astonishing to us Frenchmen, and to me especially, whom you have accustomed to something so different. You should make a journey to the other side of the Pyrenees in order to learn a lesson in veracity.

It would be impossible for you to imagine the expression of their faces when the object of their affections fails to put in a prompt appearance at the place of rendezvous, or the clamorous noise of their sighs, which they have no hesitation in uttering aloud; one is so accustomed to such scenes that there is no gossip or scandal about them. Every one knows that he will do the same on Sunday. Is it right, or is it wrong? I ask myself this question every day, without coming to a decision. I see happy lovers abusing the intimacy and the confidence of their relations. One tells what he has eaten for dinner, another describes his cold, giving every disgusting detail. The most romantic lover of them all has not the slightest conception of what we mean by gallantry. Lovers here are, prop-

erly speaking, only husbands unsanctioned by the Church. They are the drudge, the scapegoat of the legal husbands; they attend to all of madame's errands, and take care of her when she is ill.

It is so cold that I shall abandon my intention to go to Toledo. For the same reason there are no bull-fights in progress. On the other hand, there are no end of balls, which I dislike heartily. I am going, day after to-morrow, to visit Narvaez, where I shall probably see his Catholic Majesty. If you answer by return post, you may write to me here; if not, to Bayonne, *poste restante.* When I am weary and bored, that is, every day, I think that you will come, perhaps, to meet me on my arrival, and this thought gives me new life. Notwithstanding your fiendish coquetry and your aversion to the truth, I like you better than all these outspoken persons here. Do not take advantage of this confession.

Good-bye.

CIX

PARIS, *Monday, January 19, 1846.*

I regret to know that you are not braver. One should never wait until he has tooth-ache, and it is because one has a dread of the dentist

that he prepares the way for such odious suffering. Go, by all means, to see Brewster, or some one else, as soon as possible. I will go with you, if you like, and if necessary will hold you in the chair. Be assured, also, that he is the most skilful man of his profession, and, besides, he is systematically conservative.

You are extremely kind to reproach yourself for the pathetic story you told me. On the contrary, you should have rejoiced that you did a good action. There is nothing for which I have a greater contempt, even detestation, than for humanity in general; but I should like to be rich enough to remove from my knowledge all the pain with which individuals are afflicted.

You do not say a word about that in which I am most interested, that is, when I may see you. This proves that you do not care to see me. Will you take a walk Wednesday? If you have the tooth-ache, do not come. If you have any other ailment, I shall admit of no excuse, for I shall not believe in it.

CX

PARIS, *June 10, 1846.*

When I opened the package of books I was silly enough to think I should find a note from

you, and that you would have been inspired by the glorious sunshine. Not a line! So I had to read once more your letter received this morning, which seemed a little stale at the second reading. To-day is not the first time I have observed in your correspondence, and in general in your whole attitude towards me, a sort of impartial equilibrium. You are never nearer committing some act of perversity than when you have just shown me a sign of your affection and amiability. You promised to give me a day soon, but if I were to wait for you to keep your promises the patience with which heaven has endowed me would be exhausted.

The other day you said good-bye to me with as much indifference as that with which you had greeted me. It was not so the previous time. It is a curious phenomenon that water which has boiled freezes more readily than cold water. You are an illustration of this fact in physics. When you left me you were in your sulking mood, so I shall expect you to be charming Wednesday. We must visit our pretty avenues again, after they have been newly gravelled for your benefit. You will give me much pleasure by coming. But this is not the way to appeal to you. If you have any curiosity, I will reward it by showing you a monument of *auld lang*

syne. I will give you something besides; at least, I intended to give you something, but you have treated me so cruelly—first in writing the kind of letter I received this morning, and then in writing nothing at all when you sent the books —that I am not sure whether I shall offer you this present. Still, if you ask for it, I shall probably yield.

As you know, I have become an accomplished weather prophet. The wind is due north-east, and this means several fine days ahead. I wish you would pay as much attention as I do to the sun and the rain.

CXI

DIJON, *July 29, 1846.*

I hoped to find a letter from you here, but suppose you are enjoying yourself too much to think of writing to me. There was nothing for me at Bar either, which surprised and incensed me. Is it the fault of the mail, or is it yours? I had always believed the mails to be infallible. What are you doing, and where are you at this moment? I do not know, indeed, where to address this letter, so I am taking my chances in sending it to Paris. Write to me next in Paris, and then to Clermont-Ferrand.

I have seen many customs, many men, and many cities since I left you two weeks ago, and, like Ulysses, in my peregrinations I have encountered all sorts of annoyances. Each year I find provincial life more stupid and more unendurable. This time I have the blues, and see everything from a pessimistic stand-point, perhaps because you have neglected me so unmercifully. The only pleasant experience that I have had was in travelling through the dense forests in the Ardennes, and these reminded me of some other forests with pleasanter associations. I fear you seldom think of them.

As a finishing stroke, I have learned what frightful folly has been accomplished here by means of our money. Those who have been guilty of this are silly and virtuous heads of families, against whom I am obliged to hurl my thunderbolts of denunciation as a warning that they will probably die of starvation. This fierce vocation is most obnoxious to me. I need a letter from you to sweeten my temper.

Again I return to my subject. Why have you not written to me? I shall now be, I don't know how long, without any word from you, for my itinerary is too unsettled to designate any stopping-places. To sum it all up, I see no reason why I should not be furious. In all proba-

bility you are perfectly contented where you are, and I have no expectation of seeing you before winter, when the Opera will draw you back to Paris.

Good-bye. When you desire to think of me, you shall see that I know how to be magnanimous. Do not send a letter to Privas, but to Clermont-Ferrand. I have just learned that I shall not be obliged to go to Privas. After leaving Clermont I shall go probably to Lyons, but you shall hear from me beforehand.

CXII

August 10, 1846.
On board a steamship, whose name I do not know.

I went to the mountains of Ardèche in search of a remote spot where there were neither electors nor candidates, but I found instead such swarms of fleas and of flies that I am in doubt whether elections are not preferable. Before leaving Lyons I received a letter from you which made me very happy, for I was really somewhat uneasy. Although I ought by now to be accustomed to your neglect of me, I can not help thinking, when I do not hear from you, that something extraordinary has happened to you.

What would be truly extraordinary would be that you would condescend to think of me as often as I think of you.

I regret to learn that you left for D. much later than you had expected, and that, in consequence, your return will be delayed. I do not doubt that you will enjoy yourself very much at D.; but if some thought of our walks should come to you while the pleasures that you love so well are at their height, you would be doing a meritorious act by hastening your return. I made a tremendous hit last night with my rustic companions by telling them ghost stories so gruesome that their hair stood on end. The moon shone magnificently, lighting up the regular features and sparkling black eyes of the young girls, without showing off their dirty stockings and the grease on their hands. I fell asleep feeling very proud of my success with an audience perfectly new to me. The next day, when I saw my Ardèchoises in the sunlight, with their villainous hands and feet, I almost regretted my eloquence of the preceding night.

This infernal boat causes my pen to skip up and down in the most ridiculous fashion. One would have need of a special system of education to learn to write on a dancing table. I am

too sleepy and tired to write another word, so I will say good-night. Write to me the day you arrive in Paris, and the following day we must see our woods again. I shall be in Paris the 18th at the latest; more probably I shall return the 15th.

Again good-night.

CXIII

PARIS, *August 18, 1846.*

I arrived to-day in a middling condition of preservation, but my head is still dizzy from travelling four hundred kilomètres without a stop. I need your bodily presence to restore me. But when do you intend to return? That is the question. I suppose you find the sea and the marine monsters far too captivating to think of coming so soon. I need you very much, however, I do assure you. I can not tell you the number of annoyances and disappointments that have accumulated on me during this short journey. I recall Gloster's dream: "I would not sleep another such night though I were to live a world of happy days." Returning here I feel more isolated than usual, and more depressed than in any of the cities I have just left. I feel somewhat as an emigrant who returns to

his native land and finds there a new generation.

You will think I have aged shockingly during this journey. 'Tis true, and I should not be surprised if something like the fate of Epimenides were to happen to me. All this means that I am horribly blue and cross, and that I have a great desire to see you. Alas! You will not hasten the time of your return by one hour. I should be wiser to wait in patience. When your gowns shall have faded in the sea air, or when you receive new and fresh ones from Paris, you will, perhaps, think of me, but I shall be then at Cologne, or may be at Barcelona. I expect to go to Cologne the first of September, and to Barcelona in October, for I am told that marvellous manuscripts are to be found there.

They say that a woman enjoys nothing so much as to display her fine gowns. I have nothing to offer you equivalent to such joys, but I can not endure to think that such things as these constitute your happiness. God is all-wise! Whatever may be the news you have to tell me, write to me promptly. Shall we see each other before all the leaves have fallen? Do you mean to have me eat peaches from Montreuil this year? You know how I love them! If you have any affectionate memory of me, I hope it will

inspire you to form a generous resolution. I have fever, and my hand trembles abominably as I write.

CXIV

PARIS, *August 22, 1846.*

Our letters crossed. I hoped that yours would bring me better news, I mean to say, the announcement of your speedy return. Before your departure you seemed to be in a much greater hurry to see me again. I have complained for a long time of the too great variance between your *saying* and your *doing*. Apparently you are spending your time so happily, so agreeably, that you do not bestow even a thought to the time of your return to Paris. You ask me if this will give me much pleasure, which is making game of me most wickedly.

I am horribly desolate here, even more so than when travelling, and yet I am too busy to have time to notice the absence of people from Paris; but that makes no difference to me. It is you, it is our walks for which I long. If you liked them half as much as you say, you would not keep me waiting for them so long. I thought of them during all the time of my journey, and now I think of them more than ever. But you, you have forgotten them.

Paris is absolutely minus intelligent inhabitants. Hosiers and representatives are the only people left in the city, which amounts to the same thing. I expect to leave early in September for Cologne. Shall I see you again before then? I fear very much that you will reply that it is not worth coming for so little. Thus half of our year will have passed and you away or ill. I am tempted to go to —— to see you, and I should yield probably if you gave me any encouragement. However, we shall see.

Good-bye. I am in too bad a humour to write more. I end as I began, by repeating that nothing would give me more pleasure than to see you, especially if the pleasure were shared by you. Otherwise, stay where you are as long as you will.

CXV

PARIS, *September 3, 1846.*

I had imagined, in my guilelessness, that you would prefer one or two walks with me to a week more of whitebait, but since you are not of the same opinion, let it be as you will! I am lacking even the courage to refrain from writing to you, as I pledged myself to do, and it is what I should do if I were not so silly. My

journey to Cologne has been for two days a little unsettled. One of my travelling companions has decided not to go, and another perhaps can not, so I am running the risk of finding myself without a companion on the blue Rhine. That I shall consider a slight calamity, but I am uncertain if I shall come this way as I return. Thus we are in great danger, at least I am in great danger of not meeting you until November. The responsibility rests with you. I am sure it will weigh on you easily.

I shall not start before the 12th of September. I hope you will let me hear from you before then, and also that you will send me word of any commissions you wish me to do for you. It is possible that I shall be in Paris again about the beginning of October; but if I have the least courage I shall go to Strasburg, to Lyons, and from there to Marseilles. I fear this courage will be lacking, especially if you think of returning. During your absence I have made from memory two full-length portraits of you. They are both like you, but need to be retouched. We shall see if you will like them. I am bored to death, and should like to see it rain in torrents, but the weather is perfectly dry. Nothing falls but the leaves. There will remain not the sign of one in October.

You will be pleased to learn that you are to hear the same husky singers as last season at the Italian Opera, besides having another Brambilla. There are but five new voices, and a Mademoiselle Albini, who had no voice at all in 1839, but who has found one somewhere, it seems, since then.

Good-bye. I do not say it without malice. What exasperates me more than anything else is that you have received my proposition to visit you at —— with the most disdainful silence; but I shall give it no further thought.

CXVI

METZ, *September 12, 1846.*

It is extremely fortunate that you decided to write to me before my departure, else I should have gone to Germany without any news of you. Your letter came just as I was about to start. Upon the promises you give me, and whose accomplishment I expect with over-confidence, perhaps, I shall return early in October, probably the first. I hope a few leaves will still remain. We shall see if you are as good as your word.

To-morrow I go to Trèves, and from there either to Mayence or to Cologne, according as

the weather is inviting or not. In any case it would be well for you to write to me at once at Aix-la-Chapelle, and then immediately afterwards at Brussels. I need not tell you to write something pleasant which will tempt me to return. When I have started, once on the way, I have the greatest difficulty in stopping, and it will require promises of the most alluring kind to keep me from pushing on as far as Laponia.

I believe I mentioned making two portraits of you. I have now at least three, and with each unsuccessful attempt I begin again, without destroying the former effort. Well, you shall see whether my memory has played me false or true. You ask me which gown? To tell the truth, I gave little consideration to that, but the resemblance lies elsewhere than in the gown. I despair of being able ever to catch the indefinable expression on your face.

I have just arrived here after a sleepless night in a stage-coach, and my head is excessively giddy. My candles seem to be dancing around on the table. A yachting trip is arranged for to-morrow. We shall be stranded frequently, for the Moselle is extremely shallow, but this is not cause sufficient to prevent me from sleeping.

I shall write to you probably from some German inn, and most certainly from Lille, where I shall stop. I may be able by that time to announce the day of my arrival. I learn with great satisfaction that you are tired of ——; I predicted that you would be so. Any one who lives in Paris can not possibly be contented in the country. One says and does such a lot of extravagances that would not be noticed in Paris, but which at —— are as big as a house. Knowing you as I do, I fancy that you have already had this experience.

I shall forgive everything if you will tell me of your return the first or second of October.

CXVII

BONN, *September 18, 1846.*

I have been for six days in this beautiful land—not of Bonn, I mean, but of Rhenish Prussia—where civilisation is very advanced, except in the matter of beds, which are always four feet long, while the sheets are only three. I am leading a German life, that is, I rise at five o'clock and go to bed at nine, after having eaten four meals. So far, this sort of life agrees with me very well, and it is not a bad thing to do nothing but open my mouth and bat my eyes.

The German women have become horribly ugly since my last visit.

Here is a sketch of the prettiest hat I have seen; it was while on a steamboat going between Trèves and Coblenz; the surroundings are not shown in the illustration, which I give on the next page. It is a capote, around which is draped a piece of plaid stuff, falling over the edge, and one corner of which is looped up on the left side of the hat by means of a small green, white, and red rosette. The capote is black, the German lady very fair, with feet like those in the drawing.

N. B.—The drawing is made to the scale of a centimètre for a mètre. I wish you would introduce these hats. You would make them fashionable.

Speaking of monuments, I have seen none that I cared for; the German architects seem to me worse than ours. The Münster at Bonn has been looted, and the Abbey of Laahr painted a colour calculated to make one gnash his teeth. The scenery on the Moselle is much overdrawn. In reality it is not remarkable. Since passing the Tmolus I have seen nothing to stir my sense of the beautiful. My admiration extends no farther than its shade trees, and the way in which cookery is understood; in this land the all-

important business is *zu speisen.* After having dined at one o'clock, all good people have tea and cake at four, then at six they take a roll with sliced tongue, out in the garden; this enables them to exist until eight o'clock, when they go to the hôtel for supper. What becomes of the women during this time I can not imagine; what is certain is that from eight until ten o'clock not a man is at home. Every one goes to his favourite hôtel to drink, eat, and smoke. The explanation is found, I fancy, in the feet of the women and the excellence of the Rhine wine.

I suppose you will be in Paris in a few days. When I see the woods along the Rhine and the Moselle still green, I picture to myself those of our climate as bare as broomsticks. This, unfortunately, is only too probable. It is as you wished it. Good-bye. I regret that I did not ask you to write to me at Cologne, but it is now too late.

CXVIII

Soissons, *October 10, 1846.*

It appears that you were very cross last Saturday; but, save a few little clouds still floating in your letter, you had recovered your serenity

by Sunday. To continue the metaphor, I should like to see you some day under settled conditions of weather, without previous storms. Unfortunately, it is a habit that you have formed. We part almost always better friends than when we met. Let us try to have, one of these days, the unbroken amiability of which I have sometimes dreamed. I think we should both find it to our advantage.

You make me threats for the sole pleasure of depriving me of the consolations of expectation, and you are so conscious of this fault that you say you are excusable concerning a certain promise you have already made me once, and which you are now unwilling to keep. Is it not the result of mere chance that you are enabled to say you had kept your word? You were unwilling to see me longer than a quarter of an hour, which shows intentional treason on your part. I know your opinion of these subterfuges, and am willing to abide by your own judgment. You have it in your power to make me very happy or very unhappy; it is for you to decide which.

The frightful weather which has continued since Saturday is the same, doubtless, that you have in Paris. It causes me no vexation, except in thinking of our woods, with the leaves

scattered by the wind, and the ground soaked by the rain, and of the remoteness of our next walk. While tramping over the fields yesterday, in a veritable deluge of rain, I could think of nothing else. And do you regret the rain for the same reason, or only because it prevents you from going shopping?

What day were you at the Italian Opera? Was it by any chance Thursday, and might we have been near each other without suspecting it? I should like to have caught a glimpse of you surrounded by your court, in order to see if you act when in society as I should wish.

I hope to be in Paris Thursday evening, or Friday at the latest. If it is fine weather Saturday, will you go for a long walk? In the opposite case, we might take a short one, or else go to the Museum. The memory of these walks is both a delight and an affliction. It is an impression that needs constant renewal, else it would become a torment.

Dear friend, good-bye; I am very grateful for all the tenderness shown in your letter; what there is of unkindness and coldness I shall endeavour to forget. I believe you indulge this proclivity as a sort of ornament of fancy, behind which you screen your true self. I love to know

that beneath it you are all heart and all soul: this is evident, notwithstanding all your efforts to conceal it.

CXIX

PARIS, *September 22, 1847.*

The *Revue* is bothering me to death about *Don Pèdre.* I should like to know your opinion concerning it. I am torn between avarice and modesty, and shall be obliged, also, to ask you to read a part of it. The work seems to me to have the disadvantage of everything that has taken long and painstaking efforts to accomplish. I have given myself a great deal of trouble to achieve an accuracy for which nobody will thank me.

You will readily see that since your departure I have had frequent visits from the blue devils. . . .

The opinion you express of *Don Pèdre* pleases me very well, because it harmonizes with my own wishes and with what I consider to my advantage. There is one point, however, on which my heart fails me, and which has prevented me from concluding the whole business before I leave. I should be glad to have your advice, verbally, and I shall then point out a few

little things from which you will be better able to judge.

I have never been more sadly impressed than on my last visit by the stupidity of the people of the North, as well as by their inferiority to those of the South. The average Picardian seems to me to be more unintelligent than the very lowest of the Provençals. In addition, I should freeze to death in any one of the inns where I am driven by my sorrowful fate.

CXX

*Saturday, February 26, 1848.**

I believe you are now a little better. I don't know why you could be so uneasy about your brother. No wonder you have no news. Bad ones come very soon. I begin to get accustomed to the strangeness of the thing, and to be reconciled to the strange figures of the conquerors who, what's stranger still, behave themselves as gentlemen. There is now a strong tendency to order. If it continues I shall turn a staunch republican. The only fault I find with the new order of things is that I do not very clearly see

* This letter was written originally in English. It is given unchanged.—TRANSLATOR.

how I shall be able to live, and that I can not see you.

I hope, though, it will not be long before the coaches can go on.

CXXI

PARIS, *March, 1848.*

I am distressed to know of the failure of the —— house, in which, I fear, you have investments. Reassure me on this point, I pray you, and if any disaster comes to you, let us endeavour to comfort each other. For a long time to come, each day will bring us new calamities. We must sustain each other and share with each other the grain of courage that is still left in us. Will you see me to-morrow, or later? It seems a century since we met. Good-bye; you were very kind the other day, and I regret that you were not kind for a longer time.

CXXII

PARIS, *March, 1848.*

I think you are too easily alarmed. Affairs are no worse than they were yesterday, which does not mean that they are right, and that there is no danger. As to your proposition to go

away, it is exceedingly difficult to advise you, or to see distinctly through this dense fog veiling our future. There are people who think that, everything considered, Paris is a safer place than the provinces. I myself share this opinion.

I do not believe there will be any fighting in the city, because, in the first place, there is not yet a sufficient motive, and, again, because courage and intrepidity are on one side, while on the other I see only bombast and poltroonery. If civil war were to break out, it is in the provinces, I think, that it would be first declared. There exists already a deep-seated objection to the dictatorship of the capital, and it may be that manœuvres which can not now be foreseen will lead to this result in the west or elsewhere. As to riots and their consequences, remember what they accomplished in Paris during the first revolution, and what they amounted to more recently in the provinces.

The Department of Indre, where you wish to go, passed through one two years ago at Buzançais, more deplorable in its results than any of '93.

Understand that I am not advising you, and that I am reasoning only theoretically. I do not believe there is any immediate danger, and, moreover, even in the event that conditions

should become more serious, Paris would still be the safest refuge. Anyway, between Indre and Boulogne, I should choose the latter place, which has the advantage of proximity to the sea. I should be deeply distressed, however, to have you leave without seeing me. Could you not delay your departure a few days? You see that everything passed quietly yesterday. We shall have such parades for a long time to come before any shots are fired, even if this timid country ever comes to such a point. Good-bye.

CXXIII

Saturday, March 11, 1848.

The weather is taking a hand in thwarting our wishes. I hope it will be more favourable towards us Monday. This continued rain and cold makes me anxious about your sore throat. Take good care of yourself, and try to turn your thoughts from all that is taking place. I am aching and stiff after a night at the guard-house; but, after all, fatigue is an advantage in such weather as this.

I should like to see something more than your shadow. I am sorry that you retired so early. The happiness of seeing you is as great under the Republic as under the Monarchy; it

will not do to be too sparing of it. In what a strange world are we living! The most important thing I have to say to you is that I love you more and more every day, I believe, and also that I wish you would gain courage enough to tell me the same.

CXXIV

PARIS, *May 13, 1848.*

I hoped you would not go away so soon, and without saying good-bye. I even wrote to you yesterday, expecting to see you to-day. I do not know why I can not become reconciled to this journey. You do not say, however, how long you intend to remain away, drinking milk, and that is the essential consideration. I should be glad to have you attend the reception in a new bonnet at the Academy, Thursday, for new bonnets will be seen there seldom hereafter, I fear. I make this request to you purely in the interest of the Academy. In my own, I count on a beautiful walk with you for next Saturday. If you should decide to go to the Academy Thursday, send to my house before noon for the tickets.

CXXV

PARIS, *Wednesday, May 15, 1848.*

Everything went as well as possible, because they are so stupid that, notwithstanding all the faults of the Chamber, the latter was stronger than they. There are no killed or wounded, and perfect quiet reigns. The National Guard and the people are in perfect sympathy. All the leaders of the mob have been arrested, and the city is so full of armed troops that for some time to come there will be nothing to fear. I shall hope to see you Saturday. In fact, everything has happened for the best. I have been present at some extremely dramatic scenes, which interested me intensely, and which I will describe to you.

CXXVI

June 27, 1848.

I returned home this morning after a short campaign of four days, in which I was exposed to no danger, but wherein I have been enabled to appreciate all the horrors of the time and of this land of ours. In the midst of my grief and sorrow I am impressed above all else with the

stupidity of this nation. It is without parallel. I do not know whether it will ever be possible for her to turn her back upon the savage barbarism in which she is so prone to wallow.

I hope all is well with your brother. I do not think his regiment has had any serious engagement. At the same time, we are overcome with fatigue, having had no sleep for four nights.

Have but little confidence in the newspaper reports of the dead, wounded, etc. Day before yesterday I passed along the rue Saint Antoine, where I saw many windows shattered by cannon and fronts of shops injured; but, except for this, the destruction is not as great as I had supposed or as has been reported. These are the most extraordinary things I saw, which I shall describe briefly, in order to go to bed: 1. The prison has been defended for several hours by the National Guard, and surrounded by insurgents. They said to the National Guard: "Do not fire on us, and we will not fire on you. Take care of the prisoners." 2. I entered a house on the corner of the *Place de la Bastille:* it had just been captured from the insurgents. I asked the residents there: "Did they take much from you?" "Nothing was stolen," was the reply. Add to this that I took to prison a woman who

was cutting off the heads of the militiamen with her kitchen-knife, and a man whose arms were red with blood from having bathed them in the gore of a wounded man, whose body he had ripped open, and you will have some conception, will you not, of this glorious nation? One thing is certain, and that is that we are going to the dogs!

When do you mean to return? The fighting will be over in six weeks at the most.

CXXVII

PARIS, *July 2, 1848.*

I need very much to see you to cheer me up a little after the painful experiences of last week, and it is with the keenest pleasure that I learn of your intended return, sooner than I had dared to hope. Paris is quiet, and will continue so for some time to come. I do not think the civil war, or rather the socialist war, is over, but another battle as horrible as the last seems to me impossible. It was brought on by an incalculable number of circumstances, which can not occur again.

You will find, when you return, few of the hideous traces of the battle which your imagination probably pictures to you. The larger part

of them have been effaced by the glazier and the house-painter. Still I can readily imagine that you will find us all with long faces, and much sadder than when you left. Well, how can we help it? It is the fashion of the day, and we must accustom ourselves to it. We shall gradually reach the point when we shall cease to look forward to the morrow, and consider ourselves fortunate when we wake in the morning and find ourselves alive.

What I really miss more than anything else in Paris is yourself, and if you were here, I believe all the other conditions would be more supportable. It has rained for the last three days. At present I watch it as it falls with the utmost indifference; but I should not care to have it continue too long.

You speak so indefinitely of your return that I have no ground on which to build, and you are aware that I am anxious to know how long I shall have to remain in purgatory. You mentioned six weeks when you said good-bye, and you now say that you will return sooner than that. How much sooner? That is what I should like to know. Let me hear, also, the result of the disagreeable affairs which kept you from being present at my birthday fête, celebrated by the firing of cannon and guns.

Good-bye; in order to be patient I need to hear from you very often. Write to me at once, and send some remembrance. I am thinking of you constantly. I thought of you even while looking at those deserted houses in the rue Saint Antoine, and during the fight at the Bastille.

CXXVIII

PARIS, *July 9, 1848.*

You are like Antæus, who regained strength as soon as he touched the earth. No sooner do you reach your native land than you fall again into your old faults. You reply very prettily to my letter. I begged you to tell me how much longer you intended to stay away eating *amiles;* a date was not much trouble to write, yet you preferred three pages of circumlocutions, of which I can understand nothing, except that you would have come if you had not remained. I see, also, that you are spending your time most agreeably. I had no idea that Madame ——'s scarf was bought to use as a memento. You might have told me, at least, on whom you had thought proper to bestow it. In short, I am not at all pleased with your letter.

The days here are very long and tolerably warm, but as peaceful as could be wished, or

rather hoped, under the Republic. All indications point to a long truce. The disarmament is carried on vigorously, and is producing good results. One curious symptom is observed. In the insurgent neighbourhoods are numerous informants willing to point out the hiding-places and even the leaders of the barricades. It is an encouraging sign, you know, when wolves begin to fight among themselves.

I went yesterday to Saint-Germain to order the dinner for the Bibliophilist Society, and came across a cook who was not only very capable, but, moreover, eloquent. He told me he considered it a pity that so many people object to artichokes served *à la barigoule*, and he understood instantly the most fantastic dishes that I proposed. This great man resides in the wing of the *Château Neuf* where Henry IV was born. From this spot one enjoys the most entrancing view imaginable.

Two steps away you find yourself in a forest of magnificent trees and of beautiful undergrowth, and not a living soul to enjoy it all! 'Tis true, it takes fifty-five minutes to reach this charming place, but would it be impossible to go there some day for dinner or luncheon with Madame ——? Good-bye. Write to me soon.

CXXIX

PARIS, *Monday, July 19, 1848.*

You divine things perfectly when you are willing to take the trouble, and you have sent me, besides, what I asked for. What matters it if it be a repetition! Am I not like the poor ex-king? "I receive always with renewed pleasure," etc. What I can not express is my delight in receiving this familiar perfume, which is all the more delicious because it is familiar, and is associated in my mind with so many memories. At last you have decided to speak the important word. 'Tis true that it is a month since you went away, and that in leaving you said you should return in six weeks; from which it follows that I ought to see you in two weeks. But you begin at once to reckon the six weeks in your own fashion, that is, from the day you write to me. This resembles somewhat the devil's method of calculation, for, as you know, he has a very different arrangement of figures from that used by good Christians. Appoint a day, then, and let it be the most distant that I can grant you, say the 15th of August.

The 14th of July passed very quietly, notwithstanding the sinister predictions made to us.

The truth is, if one can succeed in discerning the truth in the government under which we have the good fortune to live, that the crisis is over and our chances of tranquillity are distinctly improved. It required several years for organisation and four months for arming the insurgents for the riots of the last week of June. A second exhibition of that bloody tragedy seems to me impossible, so long, at least, as present conditions are not materially changed. At the same time, an occasional conspiracy, an assassination now and then, even a few riots are likely still to occur. We may need a half century, perhaps, to perfect ourselves, the one side in constructing defences, and the other in the art of destroying them. Paris at this moment is being stored with shells and mortars, ammunition which is very portable and efficacious. This is a modern and a valuable argument, it is said. But let us stop war talk. You can form no idea of the pleasure you will give me by accepting my invitation to breakfast with Lady ——.

CXXX

PARIS, *Saturday, August 5, 1848.*

There is renewed talk of fighting, but I pay no attention to it. This evening, however, my

friend, M. Mignet, was strolling with Mademoiselle Dosne in the little garden which is in front of the home of M. Thiers. A shot, fired silently from some point above them, struck the house close by Madame Thiers' window; and as every shot carries its message, this had one for a corpulent person who was sitting just outside the garden railing, holding on her lap a little twelve-year-old girl. The shot was extracted skilfully, and, except a slight scar, she will suffer no ill effects from the wound. But for whom was it designed? For Mignet? That seems impossible. For Mademoiselle Dosne? Even more so. Madame Thiers was not at home, nor M. Thiers either. The report was heard by no one; at the same time, the shot was of the sort used in war, and air-guns are of much weaker calibre. For my own part, I believe it was a Republican attempt at intimidation, about as imbecile as everything else done nowadays. To my mind, these are the only shot to fear.

General Cavaignac said: "They will kill me, and Lamoricière will succeed me, then will follow the duc d'Isly, who will sweep away all before him." Do you not find in these words something prophetic? Very little confidence is expressed in Italian interference. The Republic will prove to be even more craven than the Mon-

archy. It may be, however, that some pretence will be made of an attempt at intervention, in the hope of obtaining thereby delays, a conference, treaties. A friend of mine who has just come from Italy was seized by Roman Volunteers, who find travellers of better fighting quality than Croatians. He insists that it is impossible to induce the Italians to fight, with the exception of the Piedmontese, who can not be everywhere at once.

I am telling you all this political news in the hope that it will cause no change in your plans. The Navy Bureau is making great preparations for the transportation of six hundred of the gentlemen taken prisoners in June; this will be the first convoy. I should not be unwilling to believe that on the day when the transport sails several thousand tearful widows will be on hand at the door of the Assembly; but of brand-new insurgents, do not believe it.

Have done with Romaic, in admiring which you are making a great mistake, for it will play you the same trick it did me. I found it impossible to learn, and now I have also forgotten classical Greek. I am astonished that you can understand anything at all of the jargon. Besides, it will fall into disuse before long. Already Greek is spoken in Athens, and if this

custom continues, Romaic will soon be spoken only by the rabble. Since 1841 not a single Turkish word, heard so frequently in the τραγήδιον of M. Fauriel, has been pronounced by the aristocracy of Greece.

Have I ever translated for you a very pretty ballad of a Greek who returns to his home after a long absence, and is not recognised by his wife? Like Penelope, she questions him for information about his family; he answers correctly, but she is not convinced. She examines him for other proofs, is convinced, and then recognises him. I leave all this for your divination.

Good-bye. I am waiting to hear from you.

CXXXI

PARIS, *August 12, 1848.*

The warm weather will soon be over, and in a few days the cold season, which I dislike so heartily, will be upon us. I can not tell you how angry I am with you. Besides this, apricots and plums are almost gone, when I had anticipated the pleasure of eating some with you. I am perfectly sure that if you had really wished to come you would be already in Paris. I am horribly lonely, and have a great mind to go away with-

out waiting to see you. The best I can do is to give you until the 25th, at three o'clock, not an hour more.

We are very peaceful. There is still some talk, it is true, that M. Ledru will stir up an insurrection as a means of protest against the investigation, but this is not to be taken seriously. The first condition of a fight is that both sides shall be armed with guns and ammunition. At present it is all in the possession of one side. Day before yesterday, at the Annual Prize Competition, a youngster named Leroy took a prize. The other youngsters all shouted: "Vive le roi!" General Cavaignac, who was present at the ceremony, I do not know why, laughed and took it with good grace. But when the same little rascal won another prize, the cries became so boisterous that the General lost his equanimity, and twisted his beard as if he would have enjoyed tearing it out.

Good-bye. I am terribly cross with you! Write to me immediately.

CXXXII

PARIS, *August 20, 1848.*

I begin to doubt if I shall see you this year. There is talk of a renewal of hostilities, and

coming of the cholera will cause a complication of affairs. It is said to be already in London, and it is certainly in Berlin. For several days a fray has been expected. It is said that the discussions at the investigation will be settled by means of gun-shots. I am so obstinate in my opinions that I can not yet believe it, but I am alone in my judgment. The condition of affairs is extremely confused. It resembles the situation in Rome during the conspiracy of Catiline as closely as one drop of water resembles another. Only, here we have no Cicero.

As to the result of an insurrection, I have no doubt of the triumph of the cause of right. No one doubts this, and yet, where fools are concerned, it is useless to count on any rational move. I am wrong, it may be, to believe that the hopelessness of the cause will prevent the uprising from taking place. We shall see, however, next week. The investigation is to begin Wednesday. It seems to me to prove one thing at least, and that is the wide division existing among the Republicans. No two of them seem to be of the same mind. What is even more to be regretted is that Citizen Proudhon has an immense number of followers, and that his little sheets are sold in the slums by the thousand. All this is very sad; but, whatever may happen,

the present state of affairs will continue for many days, and we must make the best of it.

Of paramount importance to me is to know if you will return the 25th. If there is to be a battle, it will be either lost or won on that day. Therefore, form no plans yet, or rather decide to come home and witness our victory, or our burial, on the 25th.

One other thing vexes me, which is that summer is passing, the warm days are going, and when you return there will be no more peaches. Already the leaves are beginning to wither and to fall. I foresee all the dreariness of the cold and the rain, and this seems to me a matter much more serious and certain than the uprising. For several days I have been ill, and this, perhaps, is why I have the blues. I need not tell you that I should be terribly disappointed to die before our breakfast at Saint Germain. I am hoping still that it may take place.

Good-bye; write to me soon. You ought not to tease people so far away.

CXXXIII

PARIS, *August 23, 1848.*

It was hardly kind of you to delay your reply so long. I suppose I wrote you too gloomy

a letter the last time. If life to-day does not appear in rosy tints, it looks at least a pale gray, the gayest colour consistent with the Republic. In spite of myself, they made me believe there would be more fighting; now, however, I no longer think so, or, if it is to be, it will not occur at present.

I imagine you are perishing with cold at the seashore. I am still ill, and neither eat nor sleep; but the very worst of my troubles is the frightful loneliness to which I am a prey. Nevertheless, I am compelled to work, so that it is not from inactivity that I am yawning; yet, no matter in what situation the phenomenon manifests itself, it is exceedingly disagreeable.

I can not comprehend what you find to do at D., and I see no other explanation for your sojourn among the barbarians than that you have made some conquest there of which you are very proud. I am reserving a fine quarrel against your return. Is it to be Friday or Monday? I do not believe it would be prudent for you to wait much longer.

Good-bye. I am leaving you in order to go to hear your favourite, M. Mignet, who is to make an address at the Academy. You may be assured that the investigation will be concluded without any shots; and as for the scandal, as times go now, it has been lost sight of.

CXXXIV

PARIS, *Saturday, November 5, 1848.*

I have been excessively irritated with you, for I needed very much to see you. I have been, and am still, terribly ill, and, what is worse, frightfully despondent. An hour with you would have helped me wonderfully. You did not take the trouble even, as you did formerly, to say something kind to me when you had some mischief in your head. However justly deserved are the reproaches that I make you, I must always forgive you in the end; but I should be glad if you would do something to merit it. Will you make me some *fineza*, to compensate me for all the loneliness I have endured for the last fortnight? I leave it to you to decide on the form of adequate indemnity.

Did you hear the shooting, and were you afraid? At the first three shots I thought they intended to demolish the Republic. At the fourth, I understood what was the matter.

You still have one of my Greek books. I fear you will injure your Hellenism with this Romaic jargon. At the same time, I think there are some very pretty things in this volume. I am now at work on a new book, of equal historical interest.

CXXXV

LONDON, *June 1, 1850.*

I have not written before for the reason that, having travelled thirty miles a day, I could not sit down at my desk without falling asleep on the spot. I shall not tell you many of my impressions of the journey, except that most decidedly the English individually are dull, but collectively are an admirable people. All that can be accomplished with money, common sense, and patience, they do; but they have no more conception of the arts than my cat. You would fall in love with the Indian princes. They wear low turbans, bordered all around with immense emerald pendants, and their robes are a mass of satin, cashmere, pearls, and gold! Their complexion is a dark cream colour. They are stunning looking fellows, and are said to be intelligent.

I was interrupted yesterday by a visitor at this point of my letter, and to-day, June 2d, I have not been able to recover the thread of my thoughts. We are going to Hampton Court to avoid the temptations to suicide which the Lord's Day will not fail to suggest to us. I dined yesterday with a Bishop and a Dean, who made me almost become a Socialist. The Bishop belongs

to the school which the Germans call Rationalistic, which means that he does not believe what he teaches, but, in consideration of his ecclesiastical apron of Neapolitan black, lives like a lord on his income of five or six thousand pounds, and spends his time reading Greek.

I have caught cold too, so that I am almost exhausted. Because it is June I am compelled to endure constant exposure to deadly draughts of air.

The women all seem to be made of wax. They wear such enormous bustles that there is room for only one woman to pass on the sidewalk of Regent Street. I spent yesterday morning in the new House of Commons, which is a frightful monstrosity. We had no idea before what could be done with an utter absence of taste and two million pounds sterling. Eating such inordinately good dinners from gold and silver plate, and meeting people who can win fourteen thousand pounds sterling at the Epsom races, I fear will make an out and out Socialist of me. There is, however, no probability of a revolution here. The servility of the lower classes seems strange to our democratic ideas. Every day we see some new evidence of their obsequiousness. The important question is whether they are not happier thus.

Write to me at Lincoln, general delivery. Lincoln is, I think, in Lincolnshire, but I would not swear to it.

CXXXVI

SALISBURY, *Saturday, June 15, 1850.*

I am beginning to have enough of this country. I am exceedingly tired of their perpendicular style of architecture, and of the equally perpendicular manners of the natives. I spent two days at Cambridge and at Oxford with some reverends, and, taking everything into consideration, I prefer the Capucines. I am particularly incensed against Oxford, where a *fellow* had the insolence to invite me to dinner. There was a fish four inches long in a large silver platter, and a cutlet in another. All this, with potatoes in a carved wooden dish, was served in magnificent style. Meanwhile I was nearly starved. This is an indication of the hypocrisy of those people. They like to make a show to strangers of their temperance, and if they have luncheon they do not dine.

It is deuced windy and wretchedly cold. If it were not still bright daylight at eight o'clock at night one could readily believe it was December. This does not prevent all the women from

carrying their parasols raised. I have just committed a blunder. I gave a half-crown to a person in black who showed me the Cathedral, and when I asked him for the address of a gentleman to whom the Dean had given me a letter of introduction, it turned out that it was to himself that the letter was addressed. He looked confused, and so did I, but he kept the money.

I expect to revisit Stonehenge to-morrow, and if the fog lifts I shall dine at night in London. Monday or Tuesday I am going to Canterbury, and hope to reach Paris Friday. I wish you were here in Salisbury. Stonehenge would astonish you greatly. Good-bye. I am going to return to the Cathedral. My letter will start, God knows when! I have just been told that on the Lord's Day the post-office is closed. I have an abominable cold and cough, and can get nothing but port wine to drink.

The women here wear hoops under their gowns. It is impossible to find anything more ridiculous than an Englishwoman in a hoop-skirt. Who is Miss Jewsberry, who has carroty hair and writes novels? I met her the other evening, and she told me that all her life she had dreamed of a pleasure which she never expected to realise, and this was to see me (I quote). She has written a novel entitled *Zoë*. You, who read

so much, must tell me all about this person, to whom I am a book. In the Zoological Garden there is a baby hippopotamus, which is fed on rice and milk. In *Punch*, of the 15th, there is a portrait of him, which is a speaking likeness.

Good-bye. Will you try to give me a good walk to make up for my three weeks' journey?

CXXXVII

BÂLE, *October 10, 1850.*

I have wanted for a long time to write to you, and do not know how it happens that I have been so tardy. In the first place, I have been in places so wild and solitary that the post probably never penetrates them. In the next place, I have had so much gymnastics to do in order to visit the Gothic castles of the Vosges that when evening came I did not have the strength to hold a pen. The weather, which was horrible when I left, became fine for my Alsatian trip, and I have enjoyed thoroughly the mountains, the forests, and an atmosphere which has never been vitiated by coal-smoke, nor vibrated to the tones of the chorus of the *Girondins*. I experienced the most intense pleasure during my visit to these desolate spots, and wondered how one could be content to live elsewhere. The

woods are still green, and are redolent of the delicious odours that recall our walks.

I am at last here in a model Republican country, where there are neither customs officers nor policemen, and where the beds are long enough to lie on, a comfort unknown in Alsace. I am resting here for a day. To-morrow I shall visit the Cathedral of Freibourg, and I shall then go immediately to determine whether the statues there are as beautiful as those of Irwin de Steinbach at Strasburg. I shall leave Strasburg the 12th, and shall be in Paris on the 14th. I hope you will be there. 'Tis needless to tell you how pleased I shall be to see you; but that will not deter you from going away if you feel inclined.

Good-bye. Indolent as you are, you must be pleased that I am writing to you so late, since you will not be put to the necessity of replying.

CXXXVIII

PARIS, *Monday, June 15, 1851.*

My mother is better, and will, I think, be entirely well again in a few days. I was very anxious, and feared pneumonia. I appreciate the interest you have shown in her health.

I went out yesterday for the first time in a week to see the Spanish dancers, who are on

exhibition at the Princess Mathilde's. They impressed me as mediocre. The dance at the Jardin Mabille has ruined the popularity of the bolero. Moreover, those ladies wore such a quantity of crinoline behind and such a lot of cotton in front that it is easy to see civilisation is invading everything. I was amused especially in watching a little girl of about twelve years, accompanied by an aged duenna. They could not overcome their surprise to find themselves outside of holy ground, and were both as ill at ease and boorish as could be wished.

I have just received your cushion. You are, indeed, a skilled needle-woman, an accomplishment of which I should never have suspected you. Both the selection of colours and the embroidery are remarkably beautiful. My mother admires it extremely. As for the design, the hint which you were good enough to give me was sufficient to make me understand its meaning. I do not know how to thank you.

Saint Evremont joins me here. I lost him, and have had to exert my memory to its utmost ability in order to find him again. You must tell me what you think of Père Canaye. I find that after him it is impossible to read anything more of the nineteenth century.

Good-bye.

CXXXIX

LONDON, *Saturday, July 22, 1851.*

I am disconsolate to hear that you have gone; I hoped on my return to find you in Paris, and can not realise that you will not be there. I have not even the consolation of scolding you. Try to return early in August. I shall not censure you, because you will do your very best, I am sure, to bid me farewell. Think how hard it is for me to spend several months away from you. In short, you know how eagerly I anticipate seeing you, and, if possible, you will give me that pleasure.

The Crystal Palace is a huge Noah's Ark, marvellous for the singularity of the objects one sees there, but exceedingly commonplace from an artistic standpoint. To sum it up, one can spend a very entertaining day there.

I am so vexed with your letter that I have not the courage to write. Good-bye.

CXL

PARIS, *Thursday evening, December 2, 1851.*

It seems to me that the final battle is being waged, but who shall win? If the President

should lose, it looks as if the brave Deputies will have to yield their place to Ledru-Rollin. I have returned horribly fatigued, having met no one, apparently, but a lot of fools. The appearance of Paris reminds me of February 24, only now the soldiers strike terror into the hearts of the citizens. The military say they are confident of success, but you know how much their predictions are worth. This means a postponement of our walk.

Good-bye. Write to me, and tell me if any of your family are engaged in the struggle.

CXLI

PARIS, *December 3, 1851.*

What shall I say? I know no more about it than you do. It is certain that the soldiers have a grim, stern air, and this time frighten the citizens. However it may be, we have just passed a reef, and are sailing towards the unknown. Do not be uneasy, and tell me when I may see you.

CXLII

March 24, 1852.

. . . I have all sorts of annoyances, besides a great deal of work on hand. In short, I

have undertaken, impulsively, a piece of chivalrous work, and you know that one should guard against yielding to impulses. I sometimes turn over a new leaf. The substance of the matter is that after reading the articles written for the defence of Libri, his innocence has been completely demonstrated to me, and I am now writing for the *Revue* a long dissertation concerning his trial, including all the infamous details connected with it. Pity me; one gains nothing from such work but vituperation; but there are times when one is so shocked by injustice that he makes a fool of himself.

When are we to visit the Museum? I am grieved to learn of the death of some one whom you loved; but this is one more reason for us to meet often, and to prove whether a friendship like ours is a balm for sorrow. I agree with you in thinking that life is a foolish thing, but we must not make it worse than it is. After all, it contains some moments of happiness, and the satisfaction we enjoy in the remembrance of these exceeds the dejection we feel in the recollection of our moments of unhappiness. I experience more pleasure in recalling our friendly talks than I have of sorrow in thinking of our quarrels. We should make ample provision for happy recollections.

CXLIII

PARIS, *April 22, at night, 1852.*

Your letter has done me much good. At this moment I am indulging in the nervousness which is sure to follow an impulsive action: impulses, as you know, are usually sincere. It is in such moments as this that base and sordid sentiments hold sway.

I am threatened with a suit for contempt of court and attack against the verdict. The case against me is strong, but everything is possible. *Y siempre lo peor es cierto.* Meanwhile, the *École des Chartes* is sharpening its claws to tear me to pieces. I shall be obliged, perhaps, to undergo an examination, and to offer an energetic defence. I hope I shall regain my energy when the moment of battle comes. At present I am bewildered and dejected. I thank you for what you tell me. I appreciate it sincerely. Try to keep well, so that, if the case should go against me, you can come to see me in prison.

CXLIV

Friday evening, May 1, 1852.

My dear mother is dead. I hope her sufferings were not great. Her features were calm,

and she wore her usual sweet and gentle expression. I thank you for all the interest you have shown in her.

Good-bye. Think of me, and write to me soon.

CXLV

PARIS, *May 19, 1852.*

Has this lovely weather nothing to say to you? It gives me new life, seemingly. I waited for you almost all of yesterday. Why, I do not know; but it seemed to me that you must have known that I was expecting you. Come, then, as quickly as you can, for I have a great many things to say to you. I do not know whether they wish to hang me or not. I am told sometimes one thing, sometimes another. What makes me fidgety is the thought of a public ceremony * in the presence of the flower of the rabble, and three black-robed imbeciles, stiff as posts, and imagining that they are somebody. The worst of it is that one does not dare to express the utter contempt he feels for their robes, for themselves, and for their intelligence.

Good-bye; write me a word.

* The trial of the suit relating to Libri.

CXLVI

PARIS, *May 22, 1852.*

Did our walk fatigue you? Tell me at once that it did not. I expected a word from you to-day. I am in the hands of my lawyer,* who pleases me very much. He seems to be a man of intelligence, not too talkative, and he understands the affair as clearly as I. This raises my hopes.

CXLVII

May, 1852, Wednesday, 5 P.M.

Two weeks of imprisonment and a fine of one thousand francs! My lawyer spoke finely for me; the judges were very polite; I was not in the least nervous. In short, I am less dissatisfied than I might be. I shall not appeal.

CXLVIII

May 27, 1852, at night.

Upon my word, you are very sharp!

I went the other day to see the judges, and was imprudent enough to have in my pocket a

* M. Nogent Saint-Laurens.

thousand-franc note. I have not seen it since, yet it is incredible that, among persons of such high position, pickpockets should find their way. Therefore the note must have vanished of itself; so let us give the matter no more thought.

The same day I had the misfortune to touch a man supposed to have the plague, and it has been thought prudent to quarantine me for two weeks: a great calamity, truly! My friend, M. Bocher, is to go to prison the last of June, and we shall be there together. Meantime, I need very much to see you!

My revenge has begun already. My friend Saulcy was yesterday at a house where they were discussing the judgment against me, whereupon, without seeing how the land lay, my champion rushes heedlessly into the fray, using such severe words as imbecility, fatuity, stupidity, conceit of jackanapes, and the like, and appealing to a gentleman in evening dress, whom he knew by sight, but of whose profession he was ignorant. It happened to be M. ——, one of my judges, who would have preferred, at that moment, to be elsewhere. I imagine the state of mind of the hostess, the guests, and of Saulcy himself, who, informed too late, fell on a sofa, splitting his sides with laughter, and saying: "Indeed, I'll not retract a word!"

CXLIX

Monday evening, June 1, 1852.

. . . I spend all my time reading the letters of Beyle. This makes me feel at least twenty years younger. It is as if I were making an autopsy of the thoughts of a man whom I knew intimately, and whose ideas of things and of men have had a singular influence on mine. This makes me alternately sad and cheerful twenty times an hour, and I regret having destroyed the letters that Beyle wrote to me. . . .

CL

Marseilles, *September 12, 1852.*

. . . I went to Touraine, where I visited Chambord in a beating rain, and Saint Aignan in showers of rain. I returned to Paris in the rain the 7th, left the same day in a storm, and came down the Rhône through a fog which was thick enough to cut. Not until I reached Canebière did I see the sun once more, and for the last two days it has shone in all its glory. I found there (in Marseilles, not in the sun) my cousin and his wife. I went yesterday to see them off on the *Leonidas* upon a sea of heavenly

blue, and in weather neither cold nor warm. You, who live in the dreary climate of the North, have no conception of such a temperature as this. These are my only living relatives, and are the owners of that salon which you condescended to honour with your approval.

When I saw the last curl of smoke from the *Leonidas* vanish behind the islands which the descriptions in *Monte Cristo* have made familiar to you, I was seized with a feeling of desolation and dejection, and felt as if I were an old fogy. I needed your presence, and thought how you would delight in this country which seems to me so dull. I would have you eat twenty different varieties of fruit that you have never tasted: for instance, yellow peaches, white and red melons, medlars, and ripe pistachio nuts. Moreover, you could spent an entire day in the Turkish bazaars and other curiosity shops, where there are many useless articles most fascinating to see and most disheartening to pay for.

I have asked myself often why you have never come to the south of France, and I can find no good reason. I am going to make a three days' excursion through the mountains, with no companion, and without meeting with a French-speaking biped. I am not sure if, after all, this is not preferable to intercourse with

the provincial townspeople, who seem every year to become more intolerable.

Here the mayor and the prefects have lost their heads over the proposed visit of the President. The prefectures are all being scraped and scrubbed, and eagles are set up in every spot where they can perch. There is no absurdity of which they do not think. What amusing people they are! In the midst of all this, I fear the proofs of *Démétrius* will be lost: I ought to correct them while I am away, and they have not yet arrived. . . .

CLI

MOULINS, *September 27, 1852.*

. . . I have been very ill, and am still suffering from languor, which is intensified from the fact that the remedy which brought me around, that is to say, the north wind, has given me a cold. It is excessively enervating, and with my sleepless nights and constant running about, it is not likely to mend. For forty-five hours I have had such a tendency to congestion of the brain that I thought I was soon to see the land of the shades. I was entirely alone, and treated myself, or rather I did not treat myself at all, being in a condition of physical and moral pros-

tration which rendered extremely painful the least exertion. I felt, of course, some disquietude at the thought of going to an unknown world, but to make any resistance seemed to be still more disquieting. It is, I think, through such stolid resignation that one makes his exit from this world, not because illness gains the victory, but because one has become indifferent to everything, and makes no defence.

I am waiting here until a *monsignore* with whom I have business comes out of retreat. It is highly probable that I shall have to run around for two or three days to find him, after which I shall return to Paris. To-morrow will be my birthday, and I should like to spend it with you. It happens always that I am alone and horribly depressed on this day. . . .

CLII

CARABANCHEL, *September 11, 1853.*

. . . Upon my arrival here I found every one occupied in preparations to celebrate the anniversary of the hostess. They were to play a comedy and to recite a *Loa* * in honour of herself and of her daughter. I was called

* *Loa*, a sort of conversational dithyramb, in honour of the person for whom the celebration is given.

upon to manufacture skies, mend decorations, design costumes, and so on, not to mention the rehearsals I conducted for five mythological divinities, only one of whom had ever taken part in private theatricals. My goddesses were very pretty yesterday, the eventful day, but they were dying with stage-fright; however, everything passed well. There was loud applause, although no one understood the absurd rigmarole of verses strung together by the poetic author of the *Loa.*

The comedy, which was a translation of *Bonsoir, Monsieur Pantalon,* was even better. I admire, indeed, the facility with which young society girls are transformed into fairly good actresses. At the close of the play there was a ball, followed by supper, during which a young ward of the countess improvised some graceful verses, which caused the heroine of the feast to shed tears, and all the guests to drink assiduously. This morning I have a sorry head, and the sun is deuced warm.

I am going to Madrid to see the bull-fights, and must leave my goddesses for two or three days in order to make my visits and work in the library. As there are nine ladies in the house, without a man, they call me in Madrid "Apollo." Of the nine muses, there are, unfortunately, five

who are the mothers or the aunts of the other four; but these four are Andalusians, with severe little airs, which become them charmingly, especially when they wear their Olympian costume, with peplums, which they, from love of euphony, insist on calling *peplo*.

You have, doubtless, less beautiful weather than we are having here. . . .

CLIII

L'Escurial, *October 5, 1853.*

I send you a little flower which I found on the mountain behind the ugly convent of the Escurial. I have not seen it since I was in Corsica; they call it there *mucchiallo;* here, no one knows its name. At night, when the wind passes over it, it has an odour which is to me delicious.

I found the Escurial as gloomy as when I left it twenty years ago, but it has been invaded by civilisation. There are now iron beds, and mutton chops, and all the bugs and monks have vanished. The latter I miss very much, and their absence seems to render all the more ridiculous the heavy style of Herrara's architecture. I am going to dine in Madrid to-night, for I can not endure another day in this place.

I shall, in all probability, remain in Madrid

until the 15th of this month, when I shall go to Valladolid, Toro, Zamora, and Léon, providing the weather, which until now has been superb, does not become cold and rainy. This, however, is improbable. I have been to Toledo and to Madrid. I am going to Ségovia in order to escape the balls, which bore me to death. I went the other night to see the opening of the Grand Opera. Except for the very attractive and comfortable building, and the pretty women who were there in large numbers, it was a pitiable spectacle. The actors are oppressively commonplace.

Were you here, you would see the finest collection of fruits imaginable. There is a fair in Madrid, to which are sent fruits from distant points. Most of them you have probably never seen. It is a pity that they can not be sent to you. If there is anything here that you would like to have, you have but to mention it.

CLIV

MADRID, *October 25, 1853.*

. . . Our colony has broken up, the duchess having given birth to a daughter. Her mother has constituted herself the nurse, and the rest of us have come in a body to Madrid.

I have caught an odious cold, and to make it worse there is a cursed sirocco blowing.

Notwithstanding this beastly weather, and my sneezing, I went yesterday to see Cucharis, the best matador since Montès. The bulls were so bad that they had to give one to the dogs and excite half of the others with streamers of fire. Two men were tossed into the air, and for a moment we thought they had been killed, which lent a momentary excitement to the fight. Otherwise it was abominable. The animals no longer have any spirit, and the men are little better.

As soon as the weather becomes settled, I wish to set out on my archæological journey. People keep predicting a Martinmas summer, which never comes. If you will send me your instructions, I shall receive your letter probably in time to fulfil them. Unfortunately, I do not know what is worth buying in this country. At all events, I have bought you some handkerchiefs of a very ugly design; but it seems to me that you enjoyed carrying off one of those handkerchiefs which came to me somehow, I do not know how.

One no longer sees any other than French costumes here. At the bull-fight yesterday the women wore hats. Would you like garters and

studs? If they are still worn, tell me what kind you wish, but do not delay your reply.

I am reading, or rather I am re-reading, *Wilhelm Meister*. It is a strange book, in which the most beautiful things and the most ridiculous puerilities alternate. In all that Goethe has written, there is remarkable mingling of genius and German simplicity. Was he making game of himself or of others? Remind me when I return to give you the *Elective Affinities*. Of all his writings, I consider this the most whimsical and anti-French.

I have had a letter from Paris, speaking in high terms of a book of Alexandre Dumas *fils* called *Un Cas de Rupture*, or something of the sort. In Madrid, no one reads. I have wondered how the ladies spend their time when they are not occupied in love-making, but I find no reasonable answer. All of them dream of being an empress. A young lady of Grenada was at the theatre, when some one in her box announced that the countess Teba was to marry the emperor. She rose impetuously, exclaiming: "In this country there is no future!"

Among my diversions, I forgot to mention an Academy of History, of which I am a member. It is almost as amusing as ours.

Good-bye.

CLV

MADRID, *November 22, 1853.*

When I think of the snow still covering the Guadarrama, my courage fails me. Nevertheless, the sun shines magnificently, but it shines in vain: it gives out no warmth. The nights are abominably cold, and the soldiers on sentry duty at the palace are required to stay out only a quarter of an hour each. Before leaving, I wish to attend several meetings of the Cortès, which opened day before yesterday very modestly, and without the formality of a royal speech, His Majesty now being so near his end that he is shielded from all excitement. I keep in touch with the political situation here, and know a good many of the adherents of all the parties, so that now, when we are deprived of seeing bull-fights, I find the Cortès interesting.

Since you do not care for buttons, I will bring you some garters. It was not without difficulty that I have found them. Civilisation is making such rapid strides that on almost all legs elastic has replaced the classic *ligas* of the past. When I asked the chambermaids here to tell me where the shops could be found, they crossed themselves in indignation, saying that

they did not wear such old-fashioned things, and that they were fit only for the common people. French fashions are making frightful progress. Mantillas are seldom seen. Hats, and such hats! replace them. You would be highly amused to see the masterpieces of the dressmakers in this capital.

Several years ago I spent a part of the day at Aranjuez, at the house of my friend, M. Salamanca, a stock-broker. He is a bachelor, and the wittiest and jolliest fellow I have met. He makes heaps of money, apparently, and spends it nobly. He finds time to engage both in business and politics, for he has been a minister, and will be again, if he wishes it. This man is a typical Andalusian: he is grace itself.

We had, on the 15th, at the French Embassy, a ball in honor of the fête-day of Saint Eugénie. Madame ——, the wife of the United States Minister, appeared in a costume which made every one choke with laughter—black velvet, edged with lace and tinsel, and a theatrical coronet. Her son, who has the appearance of a knave, made inquiries concerning the worth of the persons present, and after having obtained the desired information, sent a challenge to a duke who was very noble, very rich, exceedingly

dull, and anxious to live a long time. The negotiations are still going on, but nobody will be killed. Good-bye.

CLVI

MADRID, *November 28, 1853.*

Your letter crossed with mine, which you must have received at the same time that yours reached me. In it I explained why I have remained here for several days longer than I intended. My friends are insisting that I shall wait until Christmas; but I shall be in France, and probably in Paris the 12th or 15th, if the weather is not too stormy. I shall write to you from Bayonne or from Tours, where I am compelled to stop. . . .

There are a great many balls here, notwithstanding the court mourning. Out of respect, every one wears black gloves. The opening events at the Senate are causing considerable anxiety. People are wondering whether the Ministry will hold on, or whether there will be another *coup d'État.* The opposition is bitterly incensed, and proposes to give the comte de San-Luis a good cudgelling. The house where I am stopping is neutral ground, where the min-

isters and leaders of the opposition meet, which is very interesting for those who like to hear the news.

It is a fact, that what is known here as society is composed of such a small number of persons that if they were divided up, they would have no means of gaining a livelihood. Whatever one does in Madrid, provided one goes to a public place, he is sure of meeting the same three hundred persons. The result is a very amusing society, infinitely less hypocritical than elsewhere.

I must tell you a good story. It is the custom here to offer anything that is praised. At dinner, the other day, I was seated next to the Prime Minister's sweetheart: she is as stupid as a cabbage, and very big. Her beautiful shoulders were bare, and around them hung a garland with tassels of metal or glass. Not knowing what to say to her, I praised both shoulders and garland, to which she replied: "Both are at your service."

Good-bye. Write me longer letters. I might, in an extreme case, hear from you again here; but I shall hope certainly to find a letter from you at Bayonne. Why is it that I am so anxious to see you again? At the same time,

it is excessively irritating to submit to your protocols, which, for contempt of logic and reason, are worthy of those of M. de Nesselrode.

CLVII

PARIS, *July 29, 1854.*

I arrived here day before yesterday, and have not written before because I have been too sad. One of my boyhood friends has taken the cholera. To-day he is considered out of danger. In crossing the Channel, there was an icy wind, which gave me a cold, or something like rheumatism. My chest feels as if it were clasped in an iron band, and every movement is accompanied by severe pain. I am obliged, however, to leave to-night for Normandy, where I am to make a speech to the idlers of Cayenne. This troublesome business finished, I shall hasten home as quickly as possible, and I expect to reach Paris on the evening of August 2d. After that, I have no settled plans. At one time I had formed some idea of spending a month in Venice, but the quarantine regulations, and other annoyances rendered necessary by the cholera, make a journey in that direction almost impossible.

My minister has offered to send me to Mu-

nich, as Commissioner of I know not what, in regard to a Bavarian exposition. I have given no definite answer, and shall wait until after my return to Paris to decide. You will probably spend several days in London, and a visit to the Crystal Palace is worth the voyage. With respect to artistic ideals, it is perfectly ridiculous, but in the design of the building and its execution there is something so great, and at the same time so simple, that to form any conception of it, one must go to England and see it for himself. 'Tis a plaything costing twenty-five millions, a cage in which several large churches could waltz comfortably.

My last days in London were amusing and interesting. I met and associated with all the politicians. I was present at the debate on the subsidies in the House of Lords, and in the Commons, where all the famous orators spoke—very spitefully, it seemed to me. Finally, I had an excellent dinner. They serve such at the Crystal Palace, and I recommend them to you, who are an epicure.

I have brought back from London a pair of garters, which were made, so I am assured, at Borrin's. I do not know what English women wear around their stockings, nor how they procure this indispensable article; but it must be, I

fancy, a very difficult thing to get, and one that is singularly trying to their virtue. The clerk who sold me those garters blushed to his ears.

You write me words of tenderness, which would rejoice my heart if experience had not made me incredulous. I dare not hope for that which I desire most ardently. You are perfectly aware that you have but to move a finger to bring me to you. I wish that in this period of great uncertainty, you would act as if we were in danger of meeting no more. Good-bye. I love you dearly, whatever you may do. Write to me at Cayenne, care of M. Mark, the captain of the steamer. I shall be overjoyed to hear from you.

CLVIII

PARIS, *August 2, at night, 1854.*

I arrived here this morning, stiff, tired, ill, and blue. I am still suffering from this pain in the side and chest, which makes it impossible for me to sleep in a comfortable position. I reached Cayenne day before yesterday, the very day of the ceremony. I saw the Secretary at once, and contrived to escape all the official visits. At three o'clock I entered the hall of the Law School, and found eighteen or twenty women

seated in the gallery, and about two hundred men, to all appearances exactly like those of any other city. There was absolute silence. I delivered my harangue without the slightest disturbance, and at the close was politely applauded. The meeting continued an hour and a half after I sat down, and ended with the reading of some verses by a hunchback, two and a half feet high. The poetry was not bad.

I was then conducted by the directors to the Hôtel de Ville, where a banquet, lasting two hours, was given in my honor. There was excellent fish, and the oysters were delicious. I was about to leave, when the President of the Antiquarian Society rose from his seat, all the other guests following his example. He began to speak, saying, that inasmuch as from three aspects I was a man of notable attainments, he wished to propose my health, as Senator, as man of letters, and as a scholar. There was only the table between us, and I was strongly tempted to hurl a plate of Roman punch at his head.

While he was speaking, I racked my brains for a suitable response, but it was impossible to think of a word. When he had ceased, I knew that it was absolutely necessary for me to say something, so I began, without an idea of what I should say next. I rambled on in this way

for several minutes, with plenty of assurance but without giving any thought to what I was talking about. I was congratulated for my eloquent response, but this was not to be the end.

Captured by the Mayor, I was conducted to a concert given by the ladies and gentlemen of the Philharmonic Society for the benefit of the poor. They put me in a conspicuous seat, facing a large gathering of well-dressed people, the ladies very pretty and very fair. Their gowns were Parisian in mode, except that there was visible less expanse of shoulders, and that with their ball-dresses they wore russet boots. Airs from some of the comic operas were sung abominably, and then an overdressed society woman took up the collection in a cut-glass dish. I gave her twenty francs, which won me a most gracious spreading curtsey. At midnight I was escorted to my rooms, where I slept very badly, or rather I did not sleep at all.

Next morning, at eight o'clock, they came to request me to preside at a business meeting, where I listened to the minutes of the proceedings of the night before, in which it was stated that I had delivered a most eloquent address. I made a speech, to urge that all the adverbs be omitted from the report, but my request was not granted. Finally, I got into the mail-coach,

and here I am. Everything would be tiptop if I could spend a whole day with you; it would refresh me more than anything else.

I do not believe in your impossibilities. I reserve my doubts and my chagrin. My minister wishes me to go to the Exposition at Munich. It is a matter of indifference to me; but where shall I go this summer, if not to Germany? Good-bye. No matter what you do, I still love you, and I think you should be a little more touched by this than you are. You may continue to write to this address.

CLIX

INNSPRUCK, *August 31, 1854.*

I am very weary, and still feel inclined to write to you. My brain is tired, bewildered with the magnificent landscapes and panoramas on which I have gazed for four days. I went from Bâle to Schaffhausen, where we take the steamer for the Rhine journey. On both sides of the river rise mountains that are enchanting, of far greater beauty than those, so called, bordering the lower Rhine, between Mayence and Cologne, and so much admired by the English. From the Rhine we entered Lake Constance and landed

at the town of the same name, where we ate some excellent trout, and heard the zither played by Tyroleans. We then crossed the Lake to Lindau, where a railway train awaited us, and from which we enjoyed a magnificent view of the loveliest forests, lakes, and mountains which the country can show. The railway carried us to Kempton, and by that time we were spent with fatigue, as if we had been for hours in a beautiful gallery of pictures. Instead of resting, however, we left Kempton the same night, and reached Innspruck yesterday, a few minutes before midnight. The country through which we travelled was even more enchanting—no, not that, but more sublime—than that which we had just visited. Our only annoyance was in settling our accounts and in changing horses at every post-house. There were a dozen of these, at least, between Kempton and Innspruck.

As an aid to recover my strength, I am eating delicious woodcock and soups of extraordinary concoction, which one learns to enjoy with the appetite that comes to him so many feet above the level of the sea. The drawback to this journey is my ignorance of the manners and thoughts of the people, and these things would interest me far more than all the scenery. The women of the Tyrol, it seems to me, are treated

as they deserve. They are harnessed to carts, and succeed in drawing very heavy loads. I considered them very homely, with enormous feet. The fine ladies whom I met on the railway trains or steamboats are not much better. They wear hats that are a desecration, and sky-blue half-shoes with apple-green gloves. It is such characteristics as these that make up what the natives call their *gemüth,* of which they are so vain.

After seeing the works of art which are the product of this country, it seems to me that the quality thereof is fundamentally destitute in imagination. At the same time, they pride themselves upon this very quality, and in their attempt to prove their claim, fall into the most pedantic extravagances. I have just been sight-seeing in the city. Everything there is new, except the tomb of Maximilian. The site of this is admirable. No Parisian costumes here! Everybody I meet is homely, and ordinary in appearance.

One can turn in no direction without seeing a mountain, and what a mountain! To-morrow we are to climb a glacier. The weather is superb, and promises to continue so. In short, I am glad I came. I should like to have you here with me, for I fancy you would find more to enter-

tain you in this place than you do among your sea-lions.

When shall you return to Paris? Write to me at Vienna, and do not lose any time about it. Write a long, affectionate letter.

Wait; here is a flower from the Brenner.

CLX

PRAGUE, *September 11, 1854.*

My companions left me this morning in order to return to France. I am ill and out of spirits, and the gloomiest thoughts come to my mind. If I feel better to-morrow morning, I shall leave for Vienna, where I shall arrive at night. I am beginning to be horribly tired. This city is quite picturesque, and the music is excellent. I visited yesterday two or three public gardens and concerts, where I saw the national dances and waltzes, all of which were executed with the utmost propriety and composure. There can be no music, however, more captivating than that produced by a Bohemian orchestra.

The faces here are entirely unlike those I saw in Germany; very big heads, broad shoulders, small hips, and no legs at all, is my description of a Bohemian beauty.

We brought into play, to no purpose, yesterday, our knowledge of anatomy, to try to understand how these women walk. Aside from this, they have unusually beautiful eyes, and black hair that is often very long and silky, but hands and feet of a length, width, and coarseness that are a source of wonder to travellers best accustomed to the most extraordinary sights. Crinoline is unknown to them. In the evening, at the public gardens, they drink a jug of beer, and afterwards take a cup of coffee, which gives them an appetite to dispose of three veal cutlets with ham, so that there is room enough left only for several light pastries, somewhat like our tipsy cakes. Such are my observations on manners and customs.

My bed is made up with a spread of the most beautiful colors, about forty inches in length, and to this is buttoned a napkin, which serves as a sheet. When I have adjusted this over me, my servant spreads over the whole an eiderdown, which I spend my entire night in tumbling up and replacing in position. On the other hand, I eat all sorts of remarkable things; among others preserved mushrooms, which are delicious, and wild fowls, delicious also. All this does not prevent my longing for your presence.

Apparently, you are getting on amazingly

at D., with no thought of the miserable people who are roaming in Bohemia. Your sublime indifference, whether sincere or assumed (I have never been able to discover which), is extremely irritating. With you, it is out of sight out of mind. I am in great uncertainty as to my future course. If I were absolutely sure of provoking you by remaining a long time in Vienna, I should settle down here for goodness knows how many months; but you would not miss a single meal on my account, and besides, I fear I should become mortally bored with their *gemüth*. It is probable, therefore, that I shall remain in Vienna only long enough to enjoy its novelty; that is, until towards the end of the month. I may be in Berlin about the first of October, and by the 10th or 12th in Paris.

I suppose you have already sent me a letter here in Vienna, to tell me what you are doing and what you expect to do: all this will have its influence on my plans. I have just seen some autographs of Ziska and John Huss. Considering that they were heretics, they wrote very well indeed.

CLXI

VIENNA, *October 2, 1854.*

Really and truly, this good city of Vienna is an agreeable stopping-place, and now that I have friends here, and have learned the joy of being an idler, it requires an unyielding strength of mind to tear myself away from it. Besides this, I have the advantage of hearing the news from the Crimea several minutes before you. Since day before yesterday we have suffered every stage of excitement.

Has Sebastopol fallen? When this letter reaches you, all doubt will be at an end. Here, it is believed, but in my opinion with a certain incredulity. Excepting a few of the old families, whose sympathies are with Russia, the Austrians are offering congratulations. I was congratulated day before yesterday by a cabman as I was leaving the Opera House. God grant that this is not some of the news that the electric telegraph sends out when it has nothing else to do. However that may be, I consider it admirable that our soldiers, six days after landing, should have given the Russians a vigorous drubbing.

Stopping in our house is Lady Westmore-

land, sister of Lord Raglan and mother of his aide-de-camp. She has been in a terrible state. She received yesterday a line from her son, written after the battle. We are amused at the countenances of the Russians in Vienna. Prince Gortchakof remarked that the battle was a mere incident, but that it did not alter the principle involved in the war. The Belgian Minister, a man of fine wit, retorted that Gortchakof was right to retrench himself behind his principles, since they could not be captured at the point of a bayonet. Speaking of wit, I am designated here as a *lion*, whether I will or not. You must pronounce this *laïonne* in English so that you may have no misconception of the rôle I am made to play.

A few days ago I visited Baden. It is charmingly situated in a valley, only a stone's throw from Vienna, but one would fancy himself a hundred miles from a large city.

My keeper has presented me to a number of beautiful ladies. Society here being so *gemüthlich*, everything that a Frenchman says is accepted as clever. They consider me uncommonly amiable. I have written sublime thoughts in their albums. I have made them drawings; in a word, I have made myself perfectly ridiculous, and it is on account of a sense of humiliation

for having been up to such a trade that I am leaving to-day for Dresden. I shall stop there but one day, and then go on to Berlin. After visiting the Museum I shall start for Cologne, where there will be a letter from you.

Did I tell you that I went to Hungary? I was in Pesth for three days, and imagined I was in Spain, or rather in Turkey. While there my modesty was excessively shocked, for I was taken to a public bath, where I saw the Hungarian men and women helter-skelter in a court-bouillon of hot mineral water. I noticed there a lovely Hungarian woman who concealed her face in her hands, not having, like Turkish women, a covering with which to veil her face. This spectacle cost me six *kreutzer*, namely, four half-pennies.

I went to the Hungarian theatre to see *La Dame de Saint-Tropez*, not having wit enough to recognise a French melodrama under the title *Saint-Tropez à Unôz*. I heard some Bohemian musicians play Hungarian melodies, which were strange beyond measure. This music sets the natives mad. It begins with something intensely mournful, and ends in an *allegro con spirito*, which completely captivates the audience, who stamp on the floor, break their glasses, and dance on the tables. Foreigners, however, are not so

affected by this marvellous music. Finally, and I have reserved the best for the last, I have seen a collection of very old Magyar jewels of exquisite workmanship. If I could have brought you one of these you would have come to meet me at Cologne in order to have it the sooner.

During my entire journey I have been unusually well. The weather is delightful, but cold at night. I have no dread of the cold during my travels, for I have bought an enormous pelisse that cost me seventy-five florins. You could find here magnificent furs for nothing. They are, I think, the only things in this country that are cheap. I have gone bankrupt on cabs and dinners down town. The custom is here to pay the servants for one's dinner: upon leaving you pay the porter; indeed, you pay at every step, but only a trifle at a time.

Good-bye. I am not any too well pleased with your last letter, except when you tell me of your approaching return to Paris. Although I am bringing you no Magyar chains, I hope you will give me a welcome. I am beginning to long for my own hearthstone, and the evenings seem to me a little tedious. I expect to reach Cologne in less than a week, and to be in Paris from the 10th to the 15th.

CLXII

PARIS, *Sunday, November 27, 1854.*

It is very sad to lose one's friends, but it is a calamity which may be avoided only by a greater calamity, which is to love no one. Moreover, one must not forget the living for the dead. You should have come to see me instead of writing. The weather is magnificent. We could have conversed philosophically on the vanities of the world. I have remained all day by my fireside, in a despondent and misanthropic mood, and, still worse, in great bodily suffering. I feel somewhat better to-night, but I shall be worse again if I do not see you to-morrow.

CLXIII

LONDON, *July 20, 1856.*

I received your letter last evening, and it was very welcome. If I were not afraid that I was dreaming, I might say something affectionate at this time. I shall go in a few days to Edinburgh, where I am to consult a Scotch wizard. My friends wish to take me to see a real chieftain, who wears no breeches, and has never worn them. He has no stairway in his house, and he

has his bard and his wizard. Is all this not worth the trouble of making the journey?

I have found people here so cordial, so friendly, so engrossingly interested in me that it is evident they are extremely tired of one another.

Yesterday I met again two of my old sweethearts: one has become a victim of asthma, and the other is a Methodist. I have also made the acquaintance of eight or ten poets, who impressed me as even more ridiculous than our own. It was a pleasure to visit once more the Sydenham Palace, although it has been entirely spoiled by a number of huge monuments erected in memory of the heroes of the Crimea. The heroes in question are to be seen on the street drunk every day.

London is still full of people, but everybody is preparing for flight. I am to go Monday for a visit to the Duke of Hamilton, where I shall stay until Wednesday, on which day I make my entry into Edinburgh. In two weeks probably I shall return to London, where I shall see you again. Try to be here by that time; you can not give me a greater proof of affection, and you know the happiness that I shall experience in seeing you.

Good-bye. You may write to me at the

Douglas Hotel, Edinburgh, where I shall remain several days before venturing into the North.

CLXIV

EDINBURGH, DOUGLAS HOTEL, *July 26, 1856.*

I hoped to have a letter from you either here or in Edinburgh, but none has come. To make it worse, I am to be buried in the North, and I know not where to tell you to address your letters. I am going with a Scotchman to see his castle far beyond the lakes, but am unable to tell you where we shall stop on the way. He promises to show me no end of castles, ruins, fine views, and so forth. As soon as I have made a halt I shall write again.

I spent three days with the Duke of Hamilton in an immense castle, situated in a very beautiful country. Near the castle, less than an hour's journey, in fact, there is a herd of wild bulls, the last that exists in Europe. They seemed to me as tame as the deer of Paris. In every part of this castle there are paintings by the great masters, Grecian and Chinese vases that are magnificent, and books with bindings by the most noted amateurs of the last century. No taste is shown in the arrangement of all these

things, and it is evident that the owner derives but little enjoyment from them.

I understand now why a Frenchman is a welcome guest in foreign lands. It is because he takes the trouble to entertain himself, and in so doing he entertains others. I felt quite sure of being the most entertaining of any of the numerous guests of the house, and realised at the same time that it was an honour which I scarcely deserved.

I have found Edinburgh entirely to my taste, with the exception of the execrable architecture of the public monuments, which pretend to be Grecian, justifying their pretence just as an Englishwoman does her claim to appear Parisian, that is, by having her gowns made by Madame Vignon. The accent of the natives is odious. I ran away from the antiquaries after seeing their exposition, which is really beautiful.

The women are, as a rule, very homely. Short dresses are worn here, and the women conform to the fashion and to the exigencies of the climate by lifting their gowns with both hands a foot higher than their skirts, leaving visible their muscular legs, clad in half-boots made of rhinoceros leather, with feet *idem*. I am amazed at the proportion of red-headed persons I meet.

The scenery is charming, and for two days we have enjoyed warm, clear weather. In short, I am tolerably well off, except that I should like to have you here. When I am bored, and the blue devils get the better of me, I think of our days of friendly and intimate merriment, and can think of nothing to compare to them. Upon reflection, write to me at the Douglas Hotel, Edinburgh. I shall have my letters forwarded, if I do not return soon.

CLXVI

Sunday, August 3, 1856.

From a country-house near Glasgow.

I am weary for you, as you used to say so gracefully. Nevertheless, I am leading a pleasant life, going from one castle to another, and welcomed everywhere with a hospitality which I can find no words to describe, and which would be impossible anywhere else than in this aristocratic land. I am getting into bad habits. Arriving at the home of these poor people, who have an income of hardly more than thirty thousand pounds, I scarcely recognised myself at dinner when I found there was no wind band and no bagpiper in Highland costume.

I spent three days at the Marquis of Breadal-

bane's, driving in a barouche all over his park. There are nearly two thousand deer, besides eight to ten thousand more which he keeps in his forest at some distance from the castle of Taymouth. There is also, as something unusual, a thing to which every one here aspires, a heard of American bison. They are perfectly wild, and are kept on a peninsula, where they are seen through the gaps in the enclosure. Everybody there, Marquis and bison, looked as if they were bored. Their only pleasure, I fancy, consists in making people envy them, and I doubt if that is a compensation for the drudgery of entertaining all the world and his wife.

From time to time, in the midst of all this luxury, I see evidences of petty stinginess which are extremely amusing. Yet, after all, I have met none but excellent people, who get along with me, with all my difference in temperament, without the least misunderstanding.

I have just heard a story which amused me, and which I wish to share with you. An Englishman is walking in front of a poultry-house in a castle in Scotland one Saturday night. He hears a great commotion inside and outcries among the cocks and hens. Thinking that a fox has found his way there, he gives warning, but is told that it is nothing, that they are only

separating the cocks from the hens so they will not profane the Lord's Day.

Before my return you might write to me at 18 Arlington Street, care of the Honourable E. Ellice. Your letters will be forwarded from there, or else will be held until my arrival in London.

Good-bye. It is needless to tell you to write to me as often as possible.

CLXVII

KINLOCH-LINCHARD, *August 16, 1856.*

I was not too well pleased with your letter, which I received just as I was leaving Glenquoich. You are aware that you have an impetuous way of looking at things, which makes you regard the simplest actions as impossibilities. Now, reconsider what I have said, and after mature reflection tell me yes or no. Send your reply to London, care of the Right Honourable E. Ellice, 18 Arlington Street. . . .

I am beginning to be heartily sick of grouse and venison. The truly majestic scenery which meets my eyes daily still has the power to charm, but I am tired of wonders. What I can never cease to admire is the seclusiveness of these people. They might be sent to penal servitude

together, and they would continue to retain their unsociable habits. As Beyle says, this comes from their dread of being caught saying or doing something stupid, or else it is due to their temperament, which makes them prefer selfish pleasures. Solve it who can.

We reached here in company with two middle-aged men and a woman, all of high life and familiar with the world. At dinner the ice had to be broken. After dinner the husband buried himself in a newspaper, the wife in a book, and the other man began to write letters, while I played alone against the host and hostess. Observe, if you please, that the people who isolated themselves thus had not seen their hostess for even a longer time than I, and they had, necessarily, many more things than I to tell her. I am told, and from the little I have seen am inclined to believe it, that the Celtic race know how to talk. 'Tis a fact that on a market day one hears an uninterrupted sound of animated voices, of laughing and shouting. The Gaelic tongue is very soft and smooth to the ear. In England and the Lowlands there is absolute silence.

It is not kind of you to have written to me but once. I have sent you two letters, at least, to one of yours. Still I have no desire to scold you from so far away. These are my plans:

I shall leave here to-morrow to go to Inverness, where I shall remain one day; from there to Edinburgh, then to York, Durham, and possibly Derby. I expect to reach Paris the 23d.

CLXVIII

CARABANCHEL, *Thursday, December, 1856.*
(*I have forgotten the date.*)

It is pouring rain. Yesterday was the loveliest day imaginable, and another like it is predicted to-morrow. I took advantage of this beautiful weather to sprain my wrist, and I am able to write to you only because I have been taught the American method, in which the fingers are not moved. The accident happened through the fault of a horse, who insisted on choosing an inconvenient moment to speak to Lord A.'s mare, and then, indignant at my objections to his guilty passion, treacherously flung me over his head as I was lighting my cigar. This occurred in a pathway beside the sea, which was only a hundred feet below. Fortunately, I chose the path on which to fall. I was not hurt at all, except my hand, which to-day is very much inflamed.

I hope to go next week to Cannes, where you will kindly write to me, general delivery.

To bring to a close the chapter on my health, I think I shall soon feel much better. Nevertheless, I have had another of those attacks of dizziness, which upset me a good deal, but not so much as in Paris. A physician here tells me that they are nervous convulsions, and that I must take much exercise. This I am doing, but am sleeping no better than I did in Paris, although I go to bed at eleven o'clock. I should have only to say the word to be a lion (in the English sense); every one here is bored. I have been besieged with English cards and Russian cards, and some one wished to present me to the grand duchess Hélène, an honour which I promptly declined.

To furnish us gossip, we have a countess Apraxine, who smokes, wears round hats, and keeps a goat in her drawing-room, which she has had covered with grass and weeds. But the most amusing person here is Lady Shelley, who commits some new absurdity every day. Yesterday she wrote to the French consul: "Lady S. informs Mr. P. that she will give to-day a charming English dinner, and that she will be delighted to see him afterwards, at five minutes after nine." She wrote to Madame Vigier, formerly Mademoiselle Cruvelli: "Lady Shelley would be charmed to see Madame Vigier, if she would

kindly bring her music along." To which the ex-Cruvelli replied: "Madame Vigier would be charmed to see Lady Shelley if she would kindly come to her house, and conduct herself there like a well-bred woman."

And now, you—how are you spending your time? I am quite sure you seldom think of Versailles, because you have no souvenirs to recall it to you. I hope we shall go there in March to see the first primroses. Was it all real, that wonderful evening and morning at Versailles?

Good-bye. Write to me soon at Cannes.

CLXIX

LAUSANNE, *August 24, 1857.*

I found your letter at Berne on the evening of the 22d, because my excursions in the Oberland have been prolonged far beyond the limit I had set. I am uncertain where to address this. You must ere this have left Geneva. I am going to send it to Venice, where you will probably stop longest.

You might, I think, have varied your enthusiastic effusions on the delights of travelling by one or two words of flattering commendation,

by way of consolation for those who are not privileged to accompany you. I forgive you, however, on account of your inexperience in travelling. You anticipate being on your way three weeks only; this seems to me to be almost impossible, and I will give you a month. I beg you, however, to consider that September 28th is an inauspicious anniversary for me, because it dates from so far in the past. It was the 28th of September that I came into the world. It would be signally agreeable to me to spend that day in your company. A word to the wise is sufficient.

I have enjoyed my little excursion very much indeed. It has rained but one day. I did not escape a drop of it, to be sure, during the two hours I was making the descent of the Wengern Alp on a jade that slid over the rocks, and did not advance a step. I drank some champagne which we had brought over the Mer de Glace, and which I iced on the very glacier. My guide assured me that I was the first one to have that brilliant idea. I am at this moment in the presence of the Gemmi and the Valois range, which are lacking in the superb outlines of the Jungfrau and her associates. We might have met at Geneva, I believe, and have made some excursion together. It is sad to think of this. I shall

expect to find a letter from you in Paris, where I shall be the 28th.

Good-bye. Enjoy yourself, and do not overfatigue yourself. Think sometimes of me. If you will give me your exact itinerary, I will write to you from Paris. It is deuced hard to write here. The pens of this country are what you see.

I send you a little leaf which grew six thousand feet above the level of the sea.

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